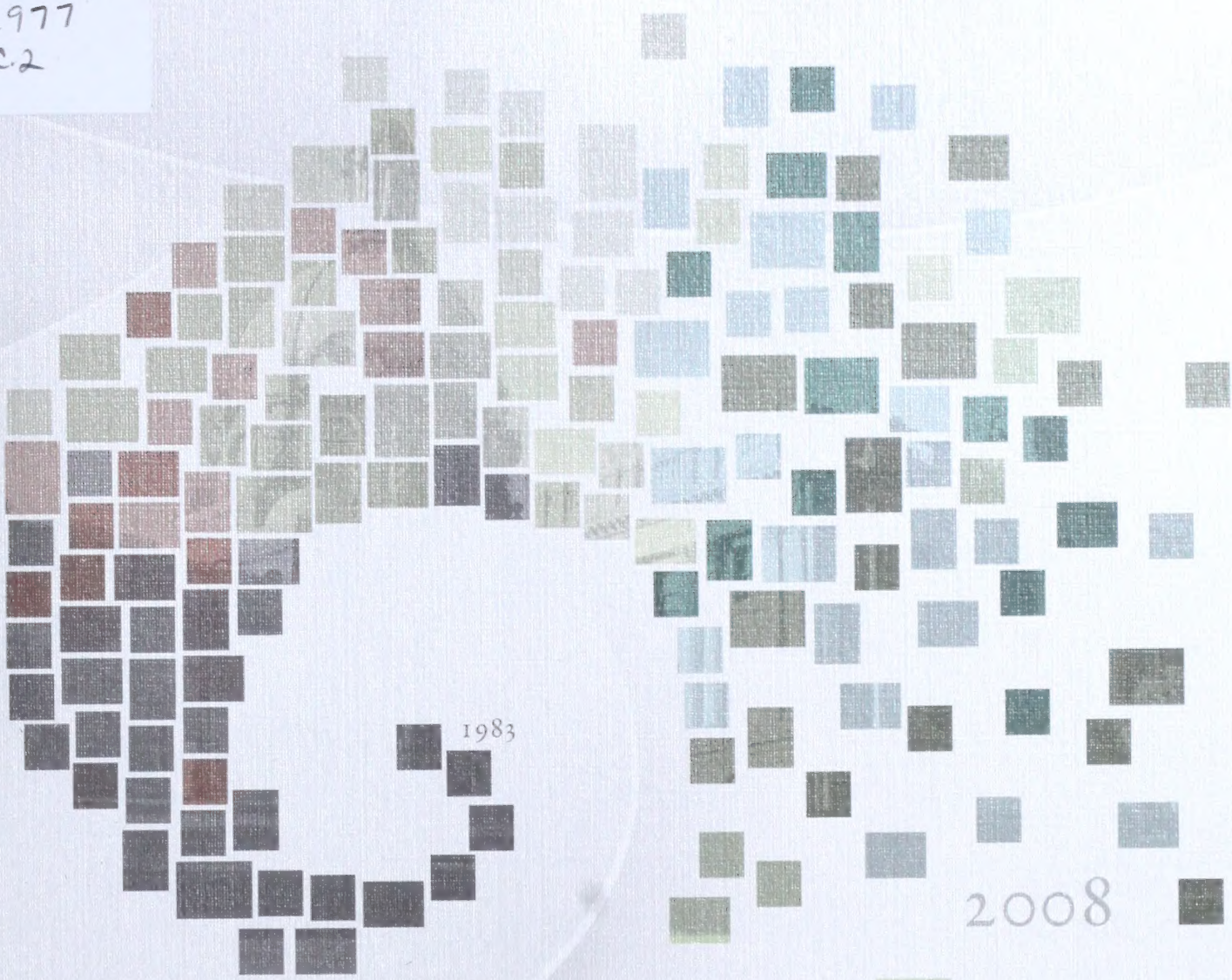
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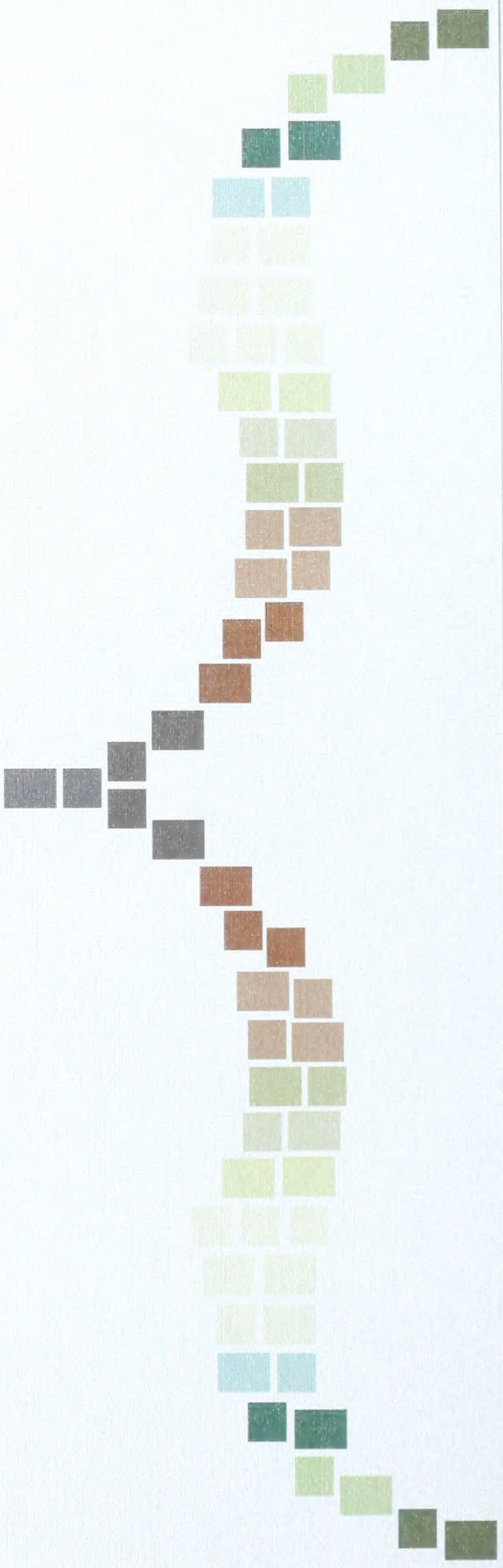


Annual Report 08

Legislative Assembly Office

and the 2008 Annual Report of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Alberta Branch and Interparliamentary Relations

of the Legislative Assembly Office





"A lot can happen in 25 years. Learning from [illegible] past achievements will ensure success for the future."

The Honourable Ken Kowalski, MLA, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

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Our Mission

To provide nonpartisan parliamentary support to the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly as they carry out their roles as elected representatives.

Our Vision

Respect Tradition

Exemplify Service

Promote Innovation

Our Values

Impartiality | Integrity | Improvement

Employees of the Legislative Assembly Office (LAO) are proud to provide services to the Legislative Assembly on behalf of the citizens of Alberta. We are guided in our work and conduct by a core set of principles that motivate us as individuals and reflect the qualities of the office as a whole.

Building on 25 Years of Experience

Julius Caesar is credited with the wisdom

"Experience is the teacher of all things."

This is true in relation to the evolving role of the Legislative Assembly Office (LAO).

The LAO has grown significantly since its inception in 1983 — we have grown in function and continually enhance our services.

Guided by our core values of impartiality, integrity and improvement, we adapt and evolve to meet the needs of our Members and their constituents. We strive to streamline our processes to increase efficiency and consistency, which ensures we get better with each passing year.

The opportunity to streamline our services presented itself on many fronts in 2008. In response to record low unemployment rates we streamlined hiring and enhanced retention practices. To ensure that Members and staff could easily access necessary internal information, we launched a new and improved OurHouse, our organization's intranet site.

Furthering our commitment to engage the public in the parliamentary system, we made all visitor branding consistent and inviting under the new banner 'Open for You to Discover'. This invitation was also extended on the committee front, where we encouraged feedback from the public on a variety of issues.

By far the greatest challenge presented itself through the spring provincial general election and subsequent transition from the 26th to the 27th Legislature. Over its 25 years the LAO has seen a combined 23 provincial general elections and by-elections. We look at each election as an opportunity to refine our processes to make the transition easier in the future.

We have a quarter-century of experience behind us and continue to build on our successes today for a stronger tomorrow.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Kowalski

The Honourable Ken Kowalski, MLA
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly



Our ~History

"Although steeped in tradition, Alberta's Legislative system is dynamic and ever-evolving to better meet the needs of Albertans. This is also the case with the Legislative Assembly Office in support of our Members. Our team provides services today that weren't even conceived of 25 years ago. Every year builds on the last, and with each new year our processes improve."

W.J. David McNeil, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Established in 1983, the origins of Alberta's Legislative Assembly Office can be traced back to 14th century England, when Parliament elected the first Speaker and appointed the first Clerk. The Legislative Assembly Office works hard to uphold and abide by parliamentary tradition while at the same time ensuring our operations are run in a nonpartisan manner and expand with the needs of the Members we serve.

It may come as a surprise to some, but the Legislative Assembly Office is not a government department. The government is the executive branch, responsible for applying and enforcing laws, and the Legislative Assembly is responsible for establishing those laws. We are a separate and unique entity from government with the passion and commitment to provide all Members of the Legislative Assembly, regardless of party affiliation, with the support they need to represent and serve their constituents.

Our ~Team

Office of the Clerk

Responsible for processing the daily business of the House and providing management and communications support to all branches of the LAO.

The Clerk acts as a liaison at the deputy minister level with government departments and assists in co-ordinating Member participation in interparliamentary activities.

Legal Services – Parliamentary Counsel

Provide legal advice to the Speaker, Members of the Legislative Assembly, LAO staff, caucuses and committees on a wide range of matters as well as advise on parliamentary procedure and draft private Members' public bills and private bills. Both Senior Parliamentary Counsel serve as table officers in the House and advise the Speaker on points of order and questions of privilege.

Human Resource Services (HRS)

Deliver customized human resource management services to the Speaker, Members, caucuses, constituencies and the LAO. This includes managing the Legislative Assembly human resource and payroll system, co-ordinating MLA and staff compensation plans and administering employee and service contracts. In addition, HRS oversees the recruitment and retention policies for nonpartisan positions, co-ordinates career counselling as well as learning and development programs, ensures safe work practices and promotes health and wellness initiatives.

House Services

Along with providing advice on parliamentary procedure, producing the Votes and Proceedings, Order Paper and the *Journals* and maintaining House records, House Services provides all arrangements for the Assembly's standing, special standing and select special committee meetings and assists with expenses, budgets, historical records and transcripts relating to committees. In addition, the recording and publishing of print and electronic versions of *Alberta Hansard*, the official report of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly and its committees, fall under the responsibility of House Services. This includes the administration of a subscription service to *Alberta Hansard*, Votes and Proceedings, the Order Paper and bills and the printing and distribution of sessional publications. The *Hansard* staff in the House Services Branch also provide proofreading and editing services to other branches.

Financial Management and Administrative Services (FMAS)

Provides full accounting services such as budget preparation and monitoring, payment processing and financial reporting as well as administrative services, including equipment and supply procurement, telecommunications management, constituency office leasing and credit card administration. FMAS also handles the responsibilities under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and Records Management Guidelines for the LAO.

Library Services

Offers information, news and reference and research services to the Members, their staff and policy field committees using current library and information technology. As well, Library Services provides training in the use of services that are delivered electronically to the Members' desktops.

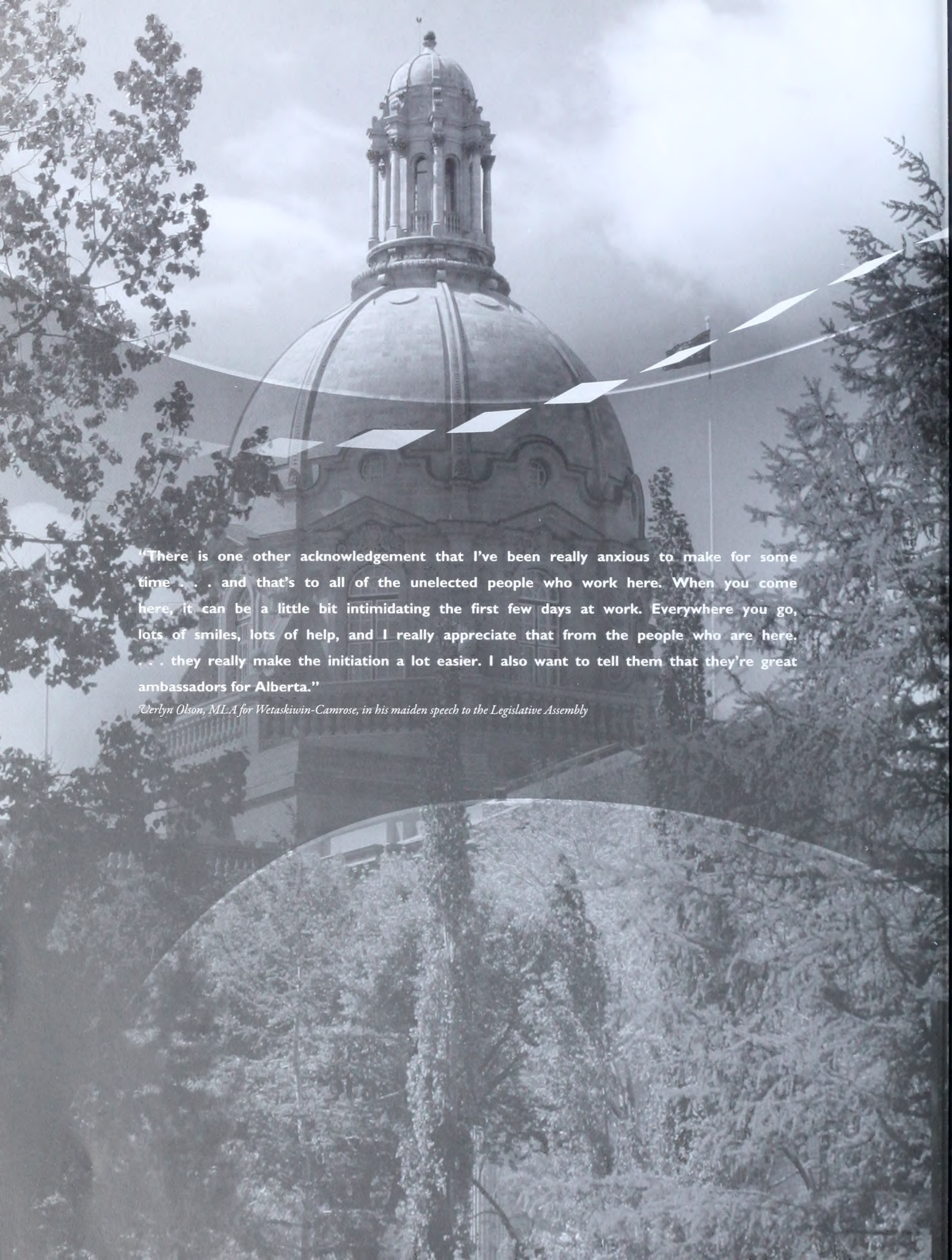
Information Technology Services (ITS)

ITS is dedicated to providing all technology services to the Speaker, Members, caucuses, constituency offices and LAO branches.

ITS places a major emphasis on supporting the technology interdependencies between clients and ensures that the operation of all services, including network infrastructure, application development, hardware and software. Importance is placed on meeting the diverse needs of all stakeholders with new and emerging technologies.

Visitor, Ceremonial and Security Services (VCSS)

Plans and executes ceremonial and special events as well as the co-ordination of school and public outreach programs, tours of the facilities and delivery of educational and orientation materials. VCSS is also responsible for exhibits and the Legislature Assembly Gift Shop. Maintaining security in the Chamber and precincts, co-ordinating security for constituency offices and managing the Legislative Assembly Page program are also responsibilities of VCSS.



"There is one other acknowledgement that I've been really anxious to make for some time . . . and that's to all of the unelected people who work here. When you come here, it can be a little bit intimidating the first few days at work. Everywhere you go, lots of smiles, lots of help, and I really appreciate that from the people who are here. . . . they really make the initiation a lot easier. I also want to tell them that they're great ambassadors for Alberta."

Verlyn Olson, MLA for Wetaskiwin-Camrose, in his maiden speech to the Legislative Assembly

~Progress 2008

~Tradition

- Parliamentary Reform
- Journals Online
- Members Numbering Project

~Service

- Rebranding of Visitor Programming
- Managing Legislature Transition
- Organizing Office Logistics

~Innovation

- Information Records Management Program
- In-House Broadcasting
- New OurHouse Launched



2,455,104

words spoken in the Legislative Assembly during the First Session of the 39th Legislature

"The equivalent of a 30-page book is published and posted online each and every day that the Legislative Assembly is in session, a remarkable achievement that never ceases to impress me. Our team is driven by the historical significance of the words that they work with. As the official report of the debates of the Legislature and its committees, these words form a part of our province's history."

Liz Sim, Managing Editor of Hansard

Parliamentary Reform

"The Standing Orders draw upon hundreds of years of parliamentary tradition and guiding principles that regulate the conduct of Members and House proceedings but are uniquely Albertan," says Rob Reynolds, QC, Senior Parliamentary Counsel.

The year 2008 saw significant parliamentary reform. Shannon Dean, Senior Parliamentary Counsel, notes: "These changes were by far the most meaningful ones in recent memory. Key changes that were brought forward included an expanded committee system, additional hours of consideration for main estimates and a significant reduction in the number of evening sittings."

As outlined in the new Standing Orders, an important change to committees was the referral of the main estimates to the policy field committees for the first time in the Assembly's history. The Legislative Assembly Office was pleased to provide support to the expanded committee system. "The policy field committees and the continuing expanded role of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts resulted in a second year of record numbers for committees, with more than 70 meetings being held," said Louise Kamuchik, Clerk Assistant/Director of House Services. For those looking for transcripts of committee proceedings, over 800,000 words were transcribed, copy-edited, proofread and posted to the Assembly's website. With a wide range of topics, including cellphone use while driving and adult guardianship, a number of these committees held public meetings, and all completed their assigned tasks and tabled final reports in October 2008.

When listening to the proceedings in the House and in committees of the Assembly, you quickly get a sense that there are established rules to follow as there will undoubtedly be a reference to the Standing Orders. Amendments to the Standing Orders are no small task and are not just quick updates. The revisions are adaptations to the continually changing environment of parliament over the past few years. The 2008 revisions are a reflection of the changes that Members, through the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing, wanted to see. Parliamentary Counsel works closely with the Committee, House Leaders and their staff to ensure that the wording reflects the intended revision. Each revision is then thoroughly reviewed line by line to ensure accuracy and updated while maintaining the integrity and intent of the publication.

Rob Reynolds, QC, Senior Parliamentary Counsel, explains these rules: "The Standing Orders draw upon hundreds of years of parliamentary tradition and guiding principles that regulate the conduct of Members and House proceedings but are uniquely Albertan." These rules are revised in order to adapt to changing environments. In 2008 the Legislative Assembly approved temporary amendments to the Standing Orders which remained in effect until the conclusion of the 2008 fall sitting, when the Assembly adopted a resolution outlining permanent changes. Updating the actual document is no small feat and took a team of people, everyone from Parliamentary Counsel to proofreaders, to create the final result, a green binder titled Standing Orders, that was delivered to all Members and an electronic version that was posted online.

Journals Online

"We strive to stay true to the form and function that tradition demands while at the same time evolving to meet the needs of the end user," says Micheline Gravel, Clerk of *Journals*/Table Research.

Sometimes it is only through progress that tradition is truly preserved. This is one of the reasons that the *Journals* have taken the leap online. Essentially the minutes of a session, the *Journals* comprise the Votes and Proceedings of an entire session and form the permanent, official record of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly. And what's more, the *Journals* are the only House document that dates back to Alberta's very first Legislature in 1906.

Unfortunately, before expanding online, access to the *Journals* was limited. A year ago if you wanted to search the *Journals* for the Second Session of the 17th Legislature, you had no choice but to turn to the hard copy itself. In an effort to preserve the original copies of the *Journals*, the *Journals* have moved online to join *Alberta Hansard* in extending the range and availability of electronic documents. Of course, there are other reasons for the advancement as well, beginning with efficiency. We are working in the immediacy age. Advancement isn't about new ways to use information; it is about finding ways to provide information faster. "Our users are demanding full access to information now," said Micheline Gravel, Clerk of *Journals*/Table Research. Having the *Journals* online will enable table officers to quickly search through over a century of material in a matter of seconds to assist with researching Speaker's rulings and procedural issues while in the House.

The move online will also ensure the *Journals* are accessible to the public. Constituents, at the click of a mouse, will be able to see what business was covered, read their Members' statements and see how their Member voted on which issues.

Over the past century the searchability of the *Journals* has increased immensely. In fact, some early editions of the *Journals* didn't even offer an index. Today you can search the index a variety of ways, and the format and style of the document have improved for easier readability.

Members Numbering Project

"To our knowledge, we are the only jurisdiction to assign a meaningful number based on date of swearing-in," says Sandra Perry, Legislature Librarian.

Have you ever wondered how many Members of the Legislative Assembly there have been and who served when? If you have, you are not alone. As a result of numerous requests throughout the years the LAO undertook an extensive project that involved assigning a number to each Member elected to the Legislative Assembly since 1905.

Now, this task may sound daunting, but the size of the Legislature Library's collection has grown by nearly 300,000 volumes in the past 25 years. That is a lot of information to catalogue, so keeping track of 791 Members should be simple, right? Not when your primary source is a 100-year-old document which contains no more than dates and barely legible signatures.

So how were the numbers assigned? Following an election, each Member takes an oath and signs the Oath of Allegiance book on the date he or she is sworn in. It is the order in which the Members appear in the Oath of Allegiance book that has directed the numbering system. "To our knowledge, we are the only jurisdiction to assign a meaningful number based on date of swearing-in", said Sandra Perry, Legislature Librarian. "It is a numbering project, but it is more than that. Through this project we were able to accurately verify each of Alberta's Members throughout our more than 100 years and provide them with a sense of the history of which they are a part."

With a unique number assigned to each individual Member, one is able, by referencing this number, to easily determine in which Legislatures a Member served. This number is also invaluable for distinguishing between individuals with seemingly identical names. "The more you dig the more you become aware of the potential inaccuracies. Even something as simple as a name isn't simple. For instance, there have been three Hugh MacDonalds to serve in Alberta's Legislative Assembly. Assigning a unique identifier such as a number ensures accuracy within our records," added Valerie Footz, Manager of Library Operations.

The assignment of these unique numbers will continue throughout future elections and by-elections. So now for the question on everyone's mind: who is number one? Our first Premier, the Honourable Alexander C. Rutherford (Member for Strathcona), is Member 0001.

300,000

the number of volumes the Legislature Library collection has grown by in the past 5 years

"We have a long-standing history of preserving Alberta's parliamentary heritage. Using emerging technologies, we have managed to balance this mandate with the need to advance services and increase Member access to information."

Sandra Perry, Legislature Librarian



1,000

participants in the School at the Legislature program in 2008.

"The degree to which the children were able to experience the daily operations of the Legislature surpassed my expectations . . . While I was able to attend on only one day of the program, I gained an appreciation of the organization and the dedication that has gone into making this program an interactive, memorable learning experience for our children. The highlight of my day was listening to the various staff discuss their job positions as all conversations resonated feelings of dedication, honour and commitment."

Parent participant of the School at the Legislature program

Rebranding of Visitor Programming

"The tag line 'Open for You to Discover' reinforces that the Legislature is a place for the public to discover, learn, explore and celebrate," says Brian Hodgson, Sergeant-at-Arms and Director of Visitor, Ceremonial and Security Services.

When you walk into the Legislature, you are greeted by a friendly face whose first question is "Where are you from?" The answer varies in both location and language, some from as far away as Africa and some who live down the street and have never before visited the Legislature. What do these people have in common? They are all welcomed to the Alberta Legislature, which is 'Open for You to Discover.'

'Open for You to Discover' is the official tag line adopted in 2008 for the Legislative Assembly. The tag line is a part of a rebranding that created a common theme and look, that included the streamlining of publications to better reflect the evolving nature of the services provided to the public. Brian Hodgson, Sergeant-at-Arms and Director of Visitor, Ceremonial and Security Services, says that the tag line "reinforces that the Legislature is a place for the public to discover, learn, explore and celebrate. Visitors to the Legislature are not just provided with a story on its history but are able to have an interactive experience. Whether visitors come in person or view the Legislature via virtual visit, the experience is one that provides hands-on learning for people of all ages and backgrounds."

To meet the changing needs of visitors, the public information section of the Assembly's website also took on a new look with photos, educational resources and tour outlines in 18 different languages. Diane Brayman, Manager of Visitor Services, sums it up with: "One of our mandates is to support the Members of the Legislative Assembly in reaching their constituents. Educating Albertans benefits both the Member's constituency and Albertans."

Education about the Legislative Assembly takes many forms. Starting with young minds, the School at the Legislature (SATL) program has evolved over the years from staff contacting schools to take part in the program to where schools are now lobbying to be chosen as a class to be a part of the program. The program is not just about reading a book on how the political system works in a classroom but hearing it first-hand from Legislature officials and staff, including MLAs, the Speaker, the Clerk and the Sergeant-at-Arms and seeing objects such as the mace and portraits up close on a tour through the building.

Education is not just for the young but also the young at heart. 'Open for You to Discover' invites seniors to the Legislature for a spring Tour and Tea each year, where seniors can enjoy a tour of the Legislature and enjoy high tea with MLAs and then watch Oral Question Period. The event is a popular one, but in case seniors miss it, the Seniors' View program offers special tours for seniors all year round.

The Legislative Assembly is the foundation of Alberta's political history and belongs to all Albertans. Staff at the LAO make every effort to ensure that Albertans have access to all the building entails. For 362 days a year it is 'Open for You to Discover.'

Managing Legislature Transition

The constant throughout the LAO is change. The Legislative Assembly Office is constantly evolving by providing short-term and long-term advice and strategic plans to support the Members of the Legislative Assembly.

The date on the calendar read February 4, 2008. An ordinary day in Edmonton? Not in this building. Premier Ed Stelmach had just asked the Lieutenant Governor to dissolve the Legislative Assembly. As writs were being issued to returning officers, so began the 2008 provincial general election of the 27th Legislative Assembly. After candidates campaigned through door-knocking in sleet and snow, brochures, e-mail, voice mail, debates and town hall meetings, voters made their choice on March 3, 2008, and 83 Members now made up the 27th Legislature of Alberta.

The Legislative Assembly Office (LAO) plays a huge role in the transition of Legislatures. Sometimes referred to as the gateway to the Assembly, the Legislative Assembly Office is one that every Member and staff has contact with during some point in their career at the Legislature. Moyra Johnson, Manager of Human Resource Services, describes the LAO as "an area where people can find the information they need quickly. Our staff is accessible and responsive to the needs of our clients." In an era of voice mail and electronic communication the LAO is a place where you will always reach a live person on the end of the phone and be welcomed in person by the staff in the Annex, who are always willing to offer assistance and advice.

That assistance can vary, but following an election the focus is largely on orientation, both administratively and procedurally. The parliamentary environment is unique and the challenges that come with it extraordinary. Members come from all walks of life, and the learning curve can be steep. So what is a typical day for staff of the LAO? Johnson notes that there is no typical day, but a memorable day followed the recent election where staff "spent the morning orientating new Members on 'life at the Legislature' and the afternoon with Members who were not re-elected, advising them on options to transition for 'life after the Legislature.'" Following the April 2008 election, LAO staff met with 33 departing Members and co-ordinated career transition workshops for approximately 100 departing constituency and caucus staff.

The constant throughout the LAO is change. The Legislative Assembly Office is constantly evolving by providing short-term and long-term advice and strategic plans to support the Members of the Legislative Assembly. For example, in 2008 strategies surrounded how to find the best talent available in a labour market that had a 3.3 per cent unemployment rate and employees across the province were being snatched up before job postings were even in place. To meet this demand, recruitment practices were streamlined so that the average number of days to fill LAO vacancies was down to 32.83 days, inclusive of advertising dates, in the 23 competitions that were conducted in 2008.

In addition to successful recruiting the LAO tackled a variety of concerns such as employee relations, managing the sometimes sensitive employee issues. In 2008 a constituency compensation plan was implemented. This provided Members and staff with a guide for recruiting and retaining staff in a fair and equitable manner in relation to other comparable staff.

So how does one describe the role of the LAO? Johnson sums it up with: "We provide the support to Members so they can represent the citizens of Alberta."

Organizing Office Logistics

"I think our systems get better from election to election. We are more prepared and organized with each move and we really work hard to build and sustain good relations with our service providers," says Dan Dunlop, Manager of Administrative Services.

In 2008 the Legislative Assembly Office welcomed 33 new Members and their staff as a result of the election, new Members and staff requiring office space, furniture and fixtures, telecommunications and equipment. As well, many returning Members took this opportunity to re-evaluate their office space and renegotiate their leases.

These aspects combined amounted to a lot of office moves to be planned and services to be arranged, all within a span of a couple of months. Sounds like a logistical nightmare, yet everything got done, and things appeared to go smoothly. But picture this: a moving truck arrives at an office, but the doors are locked, no one is there and nothing has been packed up. What happens next? The senior financial officer carting packing tape, cardboard boxes and keys shows up on scene to save the day. This scenario is based on a true story and happens more than most of us might realize.

"Our system is designed so that we all play our part and everything comes together. Problems always arise, and sometimes we have to scramble," said Dan Dunlop, Manager of Administrative Services. "The key is putting processes in place ahead of time to make managing the problems easier, and I think our team has been very successful at this."

In 2008 Alberta was still enjoying a boom, so office space was at a premium in Calgary, Edmonton and Grande Prairie. This created added difficulty that no one could foresee or plan for.

Since 2001 the Legislative Assembly Office has consistently expanded its role in respect to the set-up of constituency offices. Over the past 10 years increased technology and new privacy legislation have created added complications, but over the same period of time the LAO has developed better systems and formalized policies and procedures to deal with such issues and ensure service to Members and their staff is standardized. There is always an answer to every problem, and at the end of the day we are able to bring Members out of the Legislature and a bit closer to their constituents.

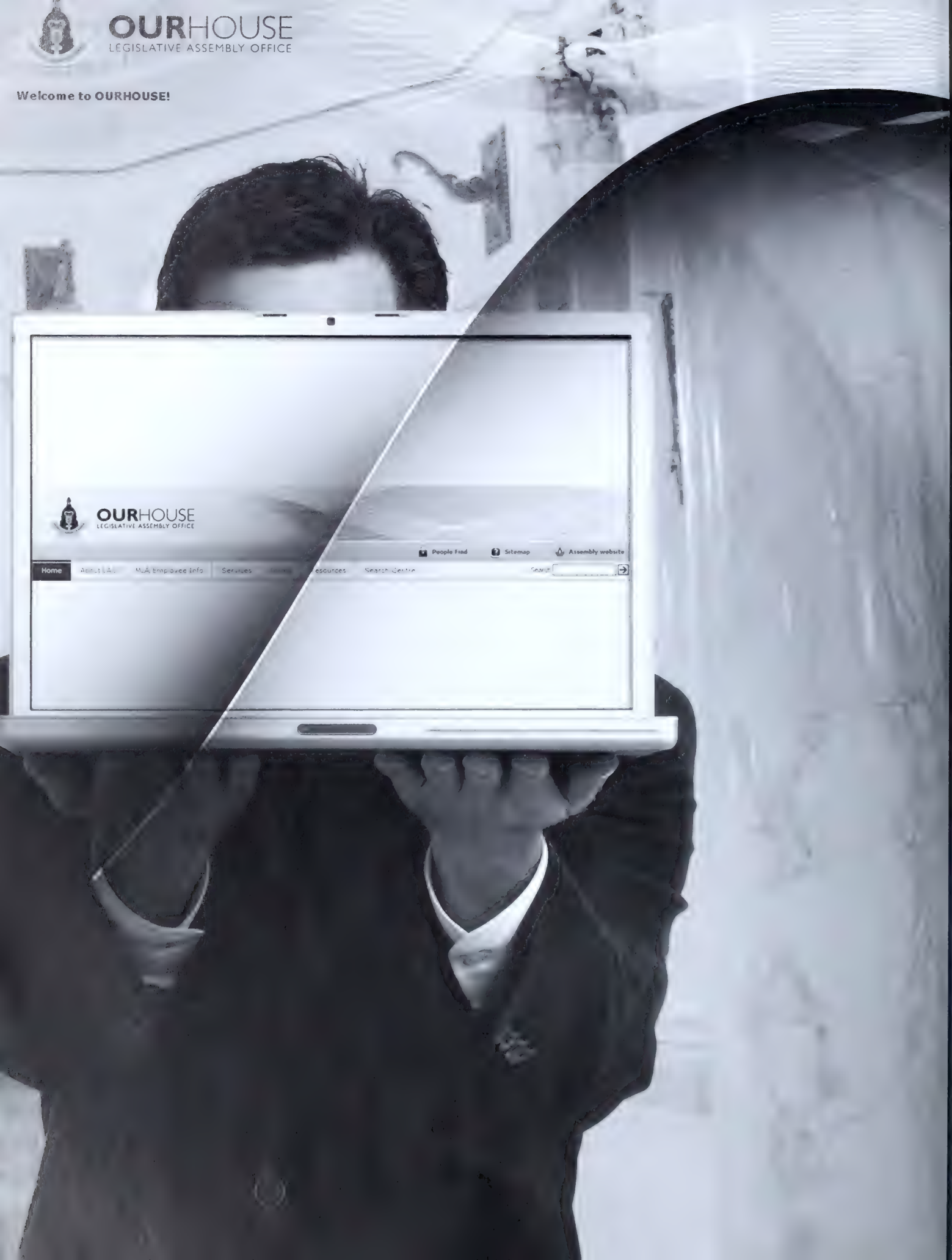
145,000

visitors were welcomed to the Legislature Building in 2008.

"As this building is both a tourist attraction and a place of work, the challenge is to make the building open and accessible to the public while maintaining a safe environment. I am confident that our team of dedicated professionals achieves this."

Brian Hodgson, Sergeant-at-Arms and Director of Visitor, Ceremonial and Security Services




OURHOUSE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OFFICE
Welcome to OURHOUSE!
OURHOUSE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OFFICE
People Find
Sitemap
Assembly website
Home
Search

32,816

original committee minutes dating back to 1973 reformatted electronically and searchable for easy reference.

"Over the past two years Legislature committee activity has significantly increased, and as a result new policies and procedures have been adopted. Taking advantage of tools such as electronic document distribution and secured access sites, we have not only moved towards paperless operations for committee activity, but we have also realized incredible efficiencies and opened up committee activity to all Members."

Louise Kamuchik, Clerk Assistant/Director of House Services

Information Records Management Program

As with the people of an organization, information is an asset that must be managed. Most of us realize that we need information to complete our day-to-day jobs, but our responsibility goes way beyond that.

We are all custodians of the information that we come in contact with and play a part in ensuring that the right information is in the right hands at the right time. "Records are the lifeblood of our organization," said Jacqueline Breault, Manager of Corporate Services. "We don't make widgets. We are essentially in the service industry, and records and information are key to sustaining our relationships."

Over the past few years, with the passing of important legislation such as the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, effective records management is less of a choice and more of a necessary function in effective risk management. Information and Records Management (IRM) is about ensuring that the recorded information assets of the Assembly are created, used, shared, stored and disposed of in a proper manner.

The Legislative Assembly Office made a lot of headway in 2008 in support of the IRM strategic plan that was developed in 2007. Significant progress was made on the creation of a new file classification and retention schedule, and with the assistance of an outside consulting group, the needs of all branches were assessed. "Our focus is currently on building the foundation for our program and giving employees the tools to manage their records effectively," said Scott Ellis, Director of Financial Management and Administrative Services and Senior Financial Officer. "Launching a website on OurHouse was just the first step in getting front-line staff engaged in the process."

The integration of SharePoint for our intranet is just one of the ways that we have moved forward. SharePoint will support the sharing and storing of records and alleviate duplication. "Records, no matter what form they are in, document the decisions of our business," said Breault.

Technology is part of the long-term solution to communicate all aspects of the program, but technology is also a part of the problem. The paperless office is nowhere in sight. In fact, with increased technology the need for records management has increased. The advent of desktop technology has made everyone a creator and custodian of information, and people's expectations for quick and full access is greater than ever before.

In addition to the technological issues, our organization has some unique challenges because constituency offices are located all over the province. Another challenge is the fact that many of the records we manage have historical significance as they document the decisions of the Legislative Assembly.

Further advancement was made by the IRM committee regarding governance, policies and procedures for the program, and other enhancements are anticipated for 2009.

In-House Broadcasting

A democratic system of governance depends on and is measured by its public participation, and as such it has always been our goal at the Legislative Assembly Office to encourage public involvement through educational programs, tours and the observation of session.

Unfortunately, not all constituents are able to visit the Legislature, so the online webcast and televised broadcast of House proceedings is essential to making the Legislative Assembly accessible to all Albertans. This is just one of the many reasons why in 2008 the Legislative Assembly Office made huge strides towards investigating an in-house broadcasting option and the possibility of securing our own channel. "Broadcasting is at the grassroots of educating the public. They can experience session and draw their own conclusions," said Rhonda Sorensen, Manager of Communications Services. "Cameras provide an unvarnished view of what goes on in the House. This serves to open the lines of communication between MLAs and their constituents."

Further to this point, in-house broadcasting would provide a great opportunity to expand the broadcasting function to promote Legislative Assembly programs and events to the public as well as to provide gavel-to-gavel coverage of the proceedings. Currently gavel-to-gavel is only available through the online webcast. As legislative committees continue to evolve and play a larger role, broadcasting could also expand to this venue, where currently only audio is available.

Requests from Members as well as media to use clips from the House continue to increase. Greater efficiencies lie in our ability to streamline the process. Right now we have two service providers: one to produce the proceedings and the other to broadcast. If we could amalgamate both functions, costs would decrease, as would the time to respond to requests. The Legislative Assembly would also have greater control over the quality of the materials archived.

Alberta was one of the first Legislative Assemblies across Canada to broadcast House proceedings, but we have never taken the leap to broadcast in-house like many of our counterparts across Canada, and our inaction to this point may prove lucky. "It's like we're coming into broadcasting at the golden time," said Sorensen. "Right now a lot of Legislative Assemblies are faced with the need to upgrade their technology from analog to digital and standard to high-definition systems. Coming into it now, we could come out on top with a state-of-the-art system right out of the gates."

This is uncharted territory for Alberta, and there are still a lot of challenges to overcome before in-house broadcasting becomes a reality, but our course has been set, and our destination is in our sights.

New OurHouse Launched

"We've come a long way from the two computers that served the entire LAO in 1988 and so have the expectations of our users," says Val Rutherford, Manager of Planning and Development.

Internal websites have become critical tools in meeting the business objectives and increasing the operational efficiency for most organizations around the world, and the Legislative Assembly Office is no exception. Although we are not a multinational corporation, we face many logistical challenges with regard to communications due to a large proportion of our staff working from offices in various locations across Alberta. Over the past decade OurHouse has been the primary way to communicate with our staff and provide our Members with services. But 10 years is a lifetime in the technological world, and it was time for an 'extreme makeover.'

The greatest advancement with OurHouse has been the technology on the back end. The new OurHouse was built with Microsoft SharePoint. This software has streamlined the management of content on OurHouse and provided various tools that make OurHouse work more efficiently for our users. Looking to the future, collaboration sites will also be possible within the framework of SharePoint. "We knew what was technologically possible for the next generation of OurHouse, and we knew what sort of tools could make the jobs of our users easier. SharePoint satisfied both needs," said Val Rutherford, Manager of Planning and Development. "We've come a long way from the two computers that served the entire LAO in 1988 and so have the expectations of our users."

With technology advancing so quickly, it is always a challenge to keep up with the latest and greatest. "It is becoming more and more difficult to figure out which technology to invest in because it is all flying at us so fast," said Rutherford. "The key to our success has been networking with a variety of organizations and research groups and listening to the concerns and needs of the end user." Through surveys, meetings and test groups, the staff and management were involved throughout the makeover process. This information became the foundation for the 'extreme makeover'.

But not every solution was found within technology. "Technology isn't always the answer to the problem," says Rutherford. "Sometimes it is the process that needs improving." Such was the case with some aspects of the OurHouse project. Along with a change in platform, the new OurHouse features a new organizational structure that is more intuitive and allows for easier site navigation. The launch was the culmination of four years of work from research to development to design.

"To remain effective, websites need to be reviewed, measured and updated continually to ensure that they meet the needs of their users," said Rhonda Sorensen, Manager of Communications Services. "Our focus in the 'extreme makeover' of OurHouse was to enhance usability for practical business purposes, create a consistent and professional look and to maintain an engaged staff, and I think we have accomplished that."

3,537,292

hits to the Legislative Assembly website in October of 2008. October 22 was the busiest day with 268,538 hits.

"Beyond ensuring our Members and staff are equipped with the tools to meet their needs, we take full advantage of available technologies to create an efficient and collaborative environment and to facilitate communication between Members and Albertans."

Cheryl Scarlett, Director of Information Technology and Human Resource Services

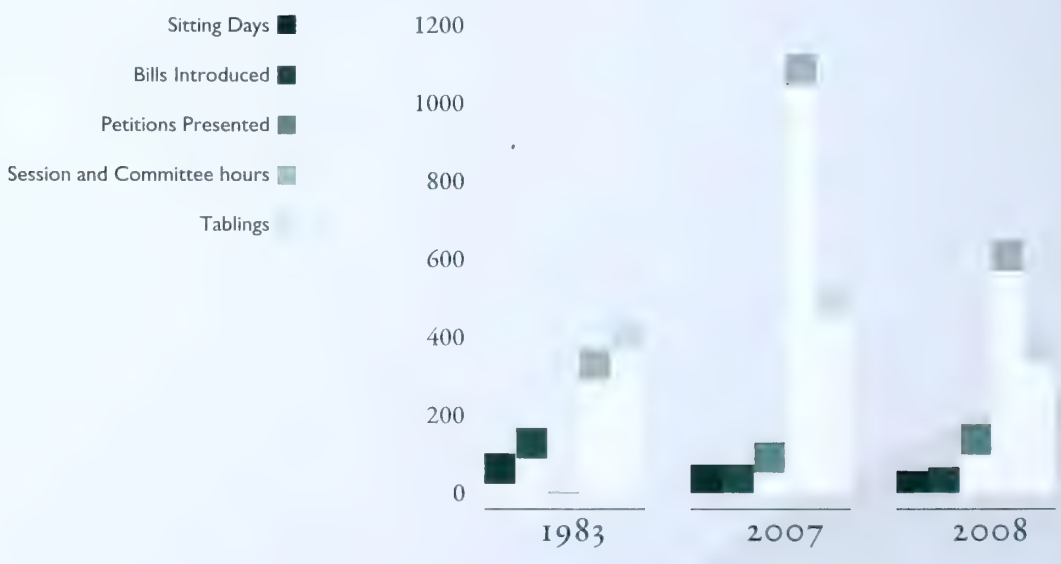
~Statistics

Note: Reporting within this section is based on the calendar year unless otherwise indicated.

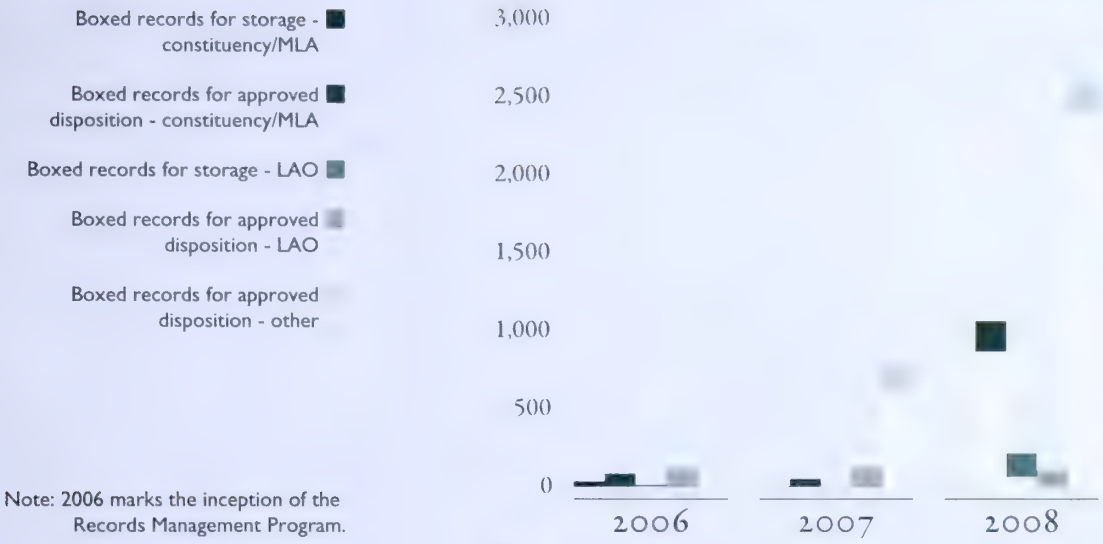
House Proceedings Documentation



House and Committee Proceedings

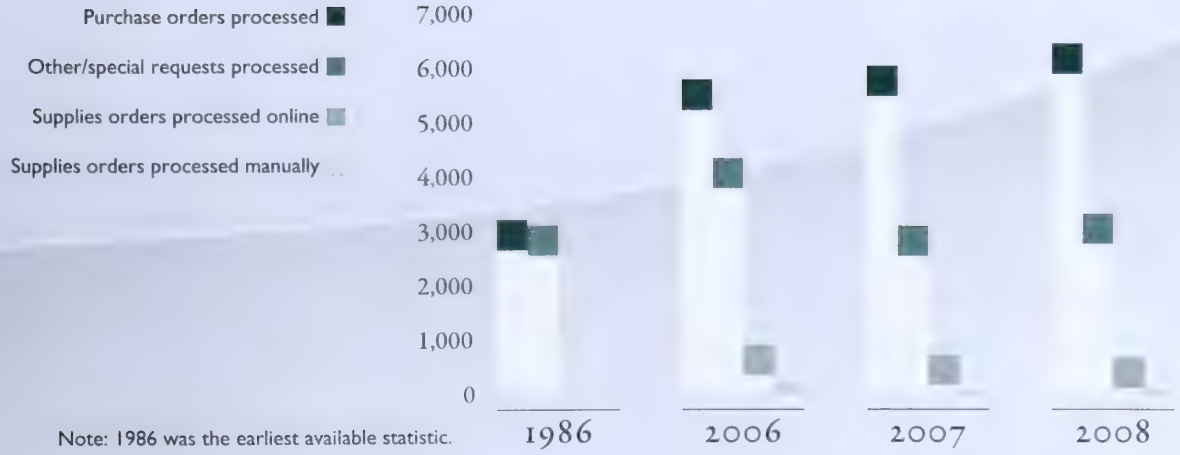


Records Management



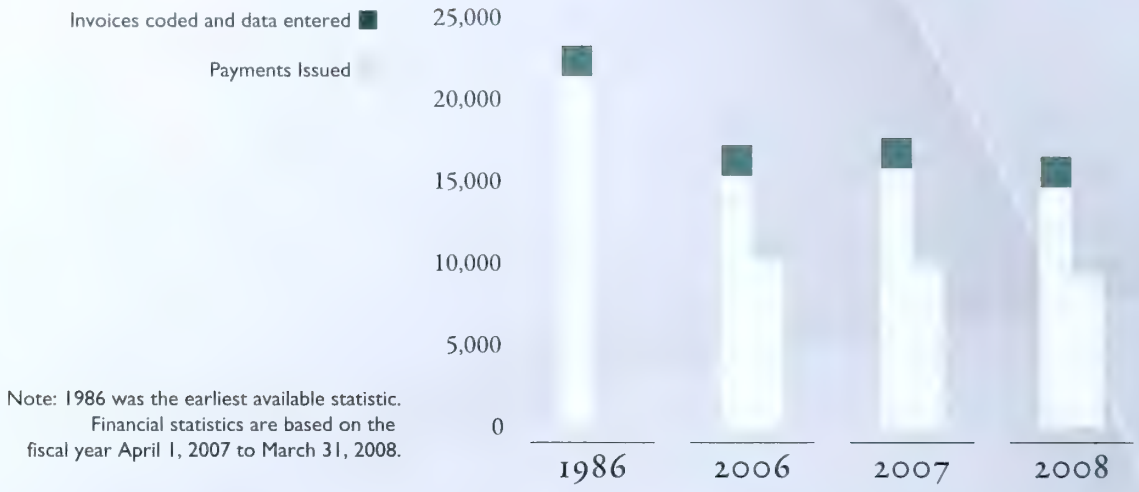
Note: 2006 marks the inception of the Records Management Program.

Supplies Processing



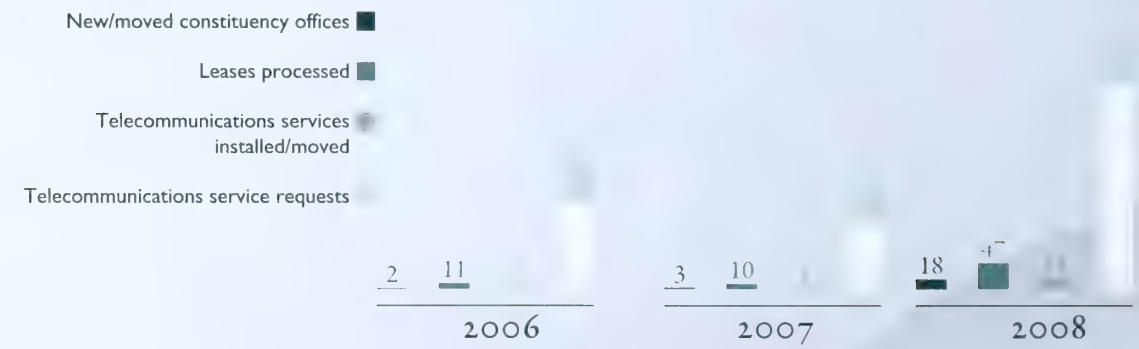
Note: 1986 was the earliest available statistic.

Financial Services

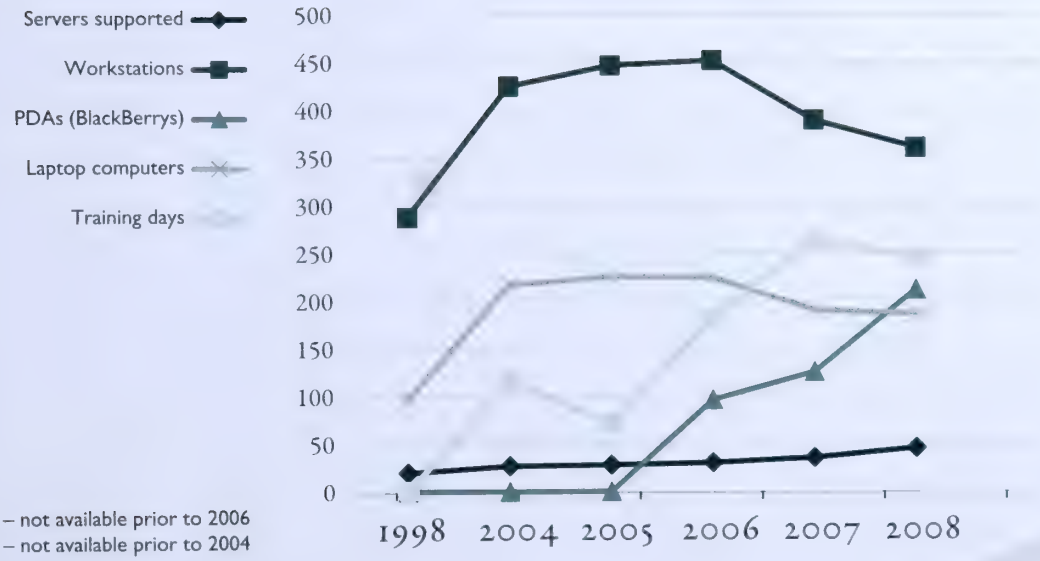


Note: 1986 was the earliest available statistic. Financial statistics are based on the fiscal year April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008.

Office Administration Trends



Technological Services



PDA numbers – not available prior to 2006
Training numbers – not available prior to 2004

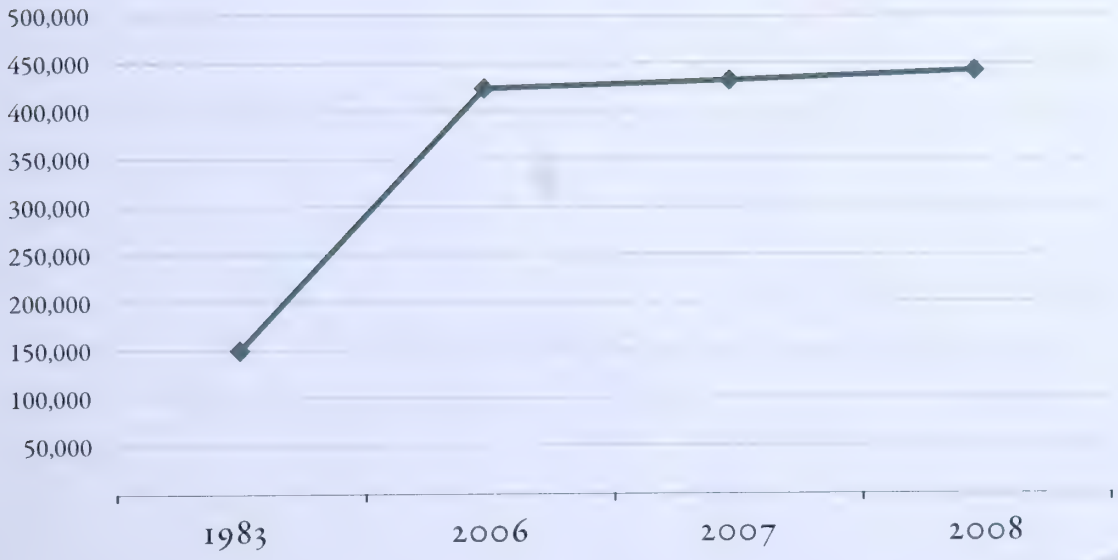
Library Requests - Hours Taken



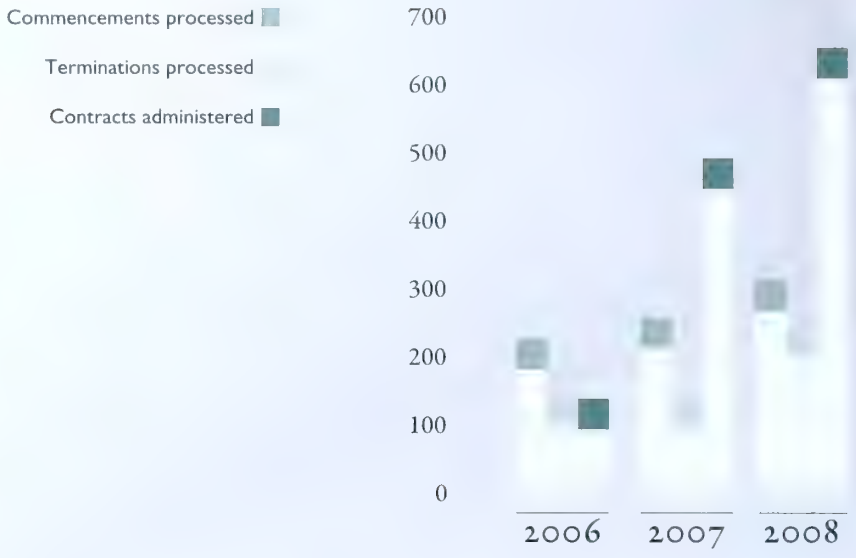
Growth in Library Electronic Services



Library Collection



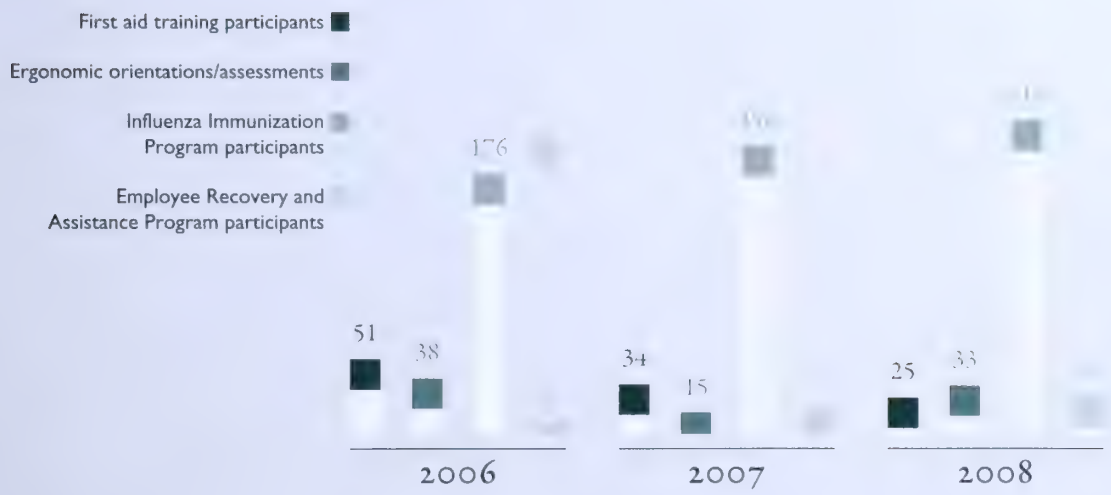
Employee Compensation



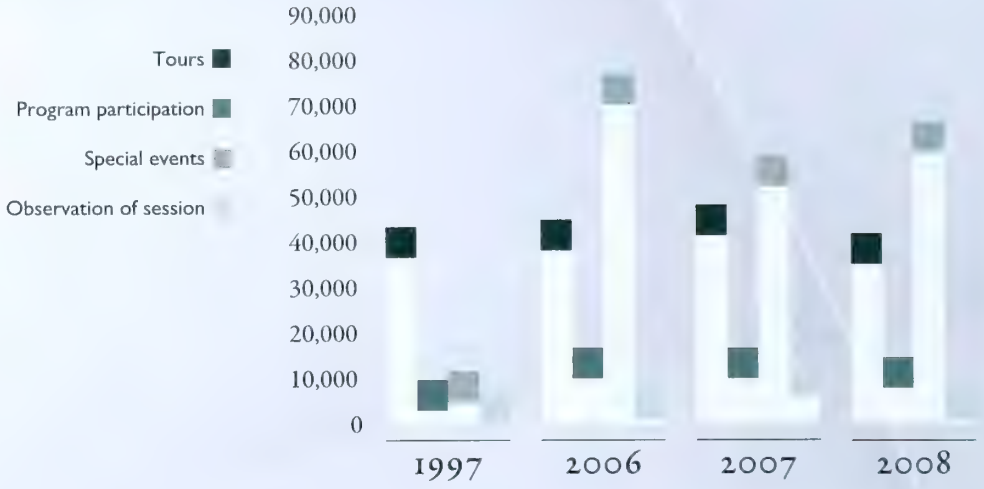
Recruitment



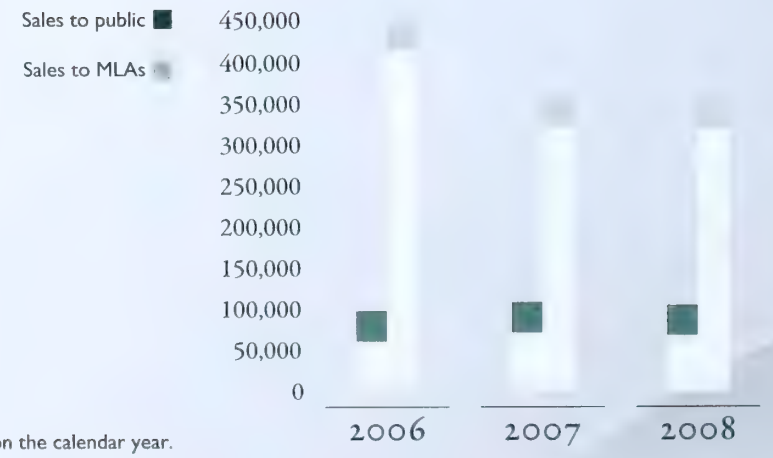
Health and Safety



Visitors to the Legislature

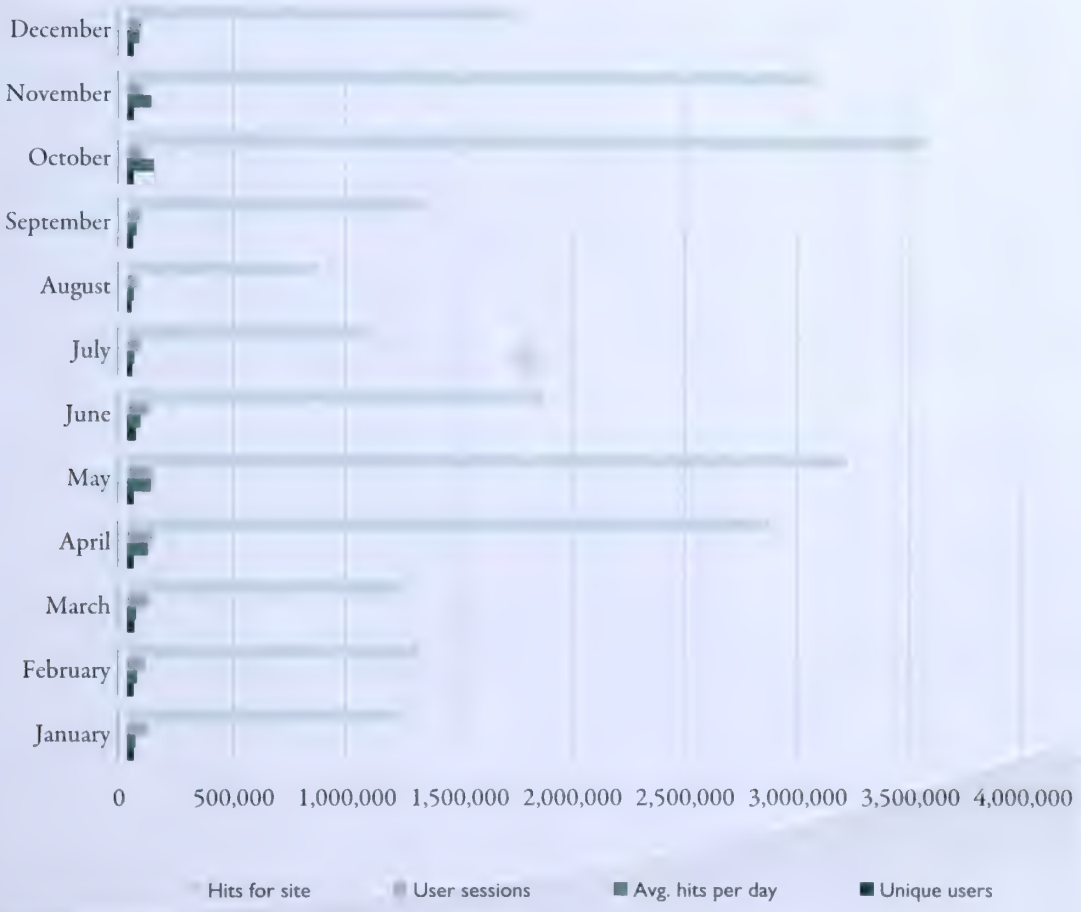


Gift Shop Sales



Note: Gift shop sales based on the calendar year.

Website Activity 2008



Event Highlights

February 18

Family Day

Over 6,000 visitors enjoyed free family activities.





March 11

Les Rendez-vous de la francophonie

Hundreds gathered in the Legislature Rotunda to celebrate French-Canadian heritage.

May 2-3

Historica Fair

Every year the Edmonton Regional Historica Fair brings hundreds of students to the Legislature Pedway to display projects highlighting aspects of Canadian history. The Speaker awards a certificate to one project that best represents an aspect of the parliamentary system in Alberta.





May 6

Legislature Library Spring Tea

Annually the Legislature Library welcomes Members and staff.

June 10

Page Speech Competition

Congratulations to Andrea Vogel for finishing first.





June 25

Unveiling Ceremony for Ensemble/ Together Statue

A bronze statue to be gifted to Quebec City in celebration of their 400th anniversary was unveiled in the Legislature Rotunda. Speaker Kowalski later presented the statue to President Michel Bissonnet during the celebrations in Quebec City on June 30.

July 1

Canada Day

Over 41,000 people gathered at the Legislature Grounds for free entertainment and to walk the Chamber floor and explore the Legislature's open house.





October 8

Japanese Garden Unveiling

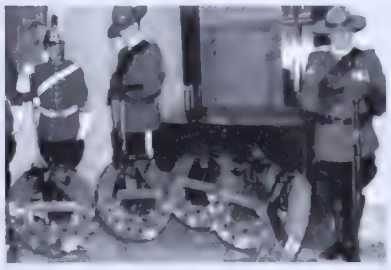
In recognition of the 80th anniversary of Japan/Canada diplomatic relations, a Japanese garden featuring 17 downey cherry trees was planted on the east grounds.

October 28

Annual Poppy Presentation

Annually the Alberta/NWT Command of the Royal Canadian Legion presents the first poppy of their campaign to the Lieutenant Governor in a ceremony at the Legislature.





November 5

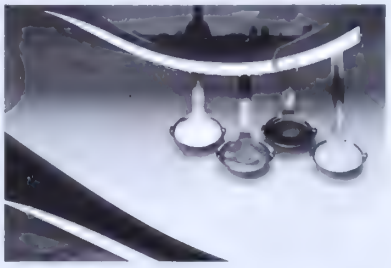
Remembrance Ceremony

Annually a remembrance ceremony is held in the rotunda to commemorate Canadian soldiers lost at war.

November 28

United Way

Every year the Legislative Assembly Office campaigns to raise funds in support of the United Way. In 2008 the United Way Committee created a cookbook titled 'What's Cookin' in the House' with over 80 recipes, including contributions from the Premier, the Speaker and opposition party leaders.





December 4

Christmas Light-up

The Christmas light-up kicks off the holiday season at the Legislature, which includes free choral performances and hot chocolate against the backdrop of the lit grounds.

Financial Statements

As at March 31, 2008

Auditor's Report

Statement of Financial Position

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

Statement of Operations

Statement of Cash Flows

Notes to the Financial Statements

Schedule 1 – Expenses Detailed by Object

Schedule 2 – Salary and Benefits Disclosure

AUDITOR GENERAL
Alberta

AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

I have audited the statement of financial position of the Legislative Assembly Office as at March 31, 2008 and the statements of changes in net assets, operations and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Office's management. My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit.

I conducted my audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that I plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In my opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Office as at March 31, 2008 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Fred J. Dunn, FCA
Auditor General

Edmonton, Alberta
June 27, 2008

Statement of Financial Position

	2008	2007
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash	$29,288,507	$24,423,218
Accounts receivable and advances	242,053	392,826
Inventory held for resale	242,146	234,788
	29,772,706	**25,050,832**
Capital assets (Note 4)	1,751,354	1,968,308
	31,524,060	**27,019,140**
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	2,722,602	2,430,053
Vacation pay liability	1,046,124	991,000
	3,768,726	**3,421,053**
Members' transition allowance liability (Note 6)	**19,279,503**	**18,568,977**
Net assets	**8,475,831**	**5,029,110**
	31,524,060	27,019,140

The accompanying notes and schedules are part of these financial statements.

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

	2008	2007
Net assets at beginning of year	$5,029,110	$6,306,430
Net operating results	(43,979,415)	(40,190,885)
Net transfer from general revenues	47,426,136	38,913,565
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	**8,475,831**	**5,029,110**

The accompanying notes and schedules are part of these financial statements.

Statement of Operations

For the Year Ended March 31, 2008

	2008		2007
	BUDGET	ACTUAL	ACTUAL
REVENUES			
Gift shop sales, services and fees	$528,000	$504,002	$480,743
Other	-	253,038	184,986
Contribution from Alberta Infrastructure for accommodations costs provided at no charge (Note 5)	-	624,687	748,593
	528,000	**1,381,727**	**1,414,322**
EXPENSES			
Voted:			
Alberta Alliance Opposition services	153,000	113,236	86,800
Financial management and administrative services	1,076,000	1,003,337	917,822
Government Members' services	3,240,000	2,148,566	1,821,386
House services	7,155,000	5,800,408	5,427,959
Human resource services	1,320,000	1,125,702	1,006,303
Independent Member's services - Dr. Oberg, MLA	-	-	20,123
Independent Member's services - Mr. Backs, MLA	153,000	153,000	26,007
Information technology services	3,374,000	2,768,962	2,694,366
Legislative committees	851,000	372,896	204,613
Legislature Library	2,350,000	2,318,699	2,156,043
MLA Administration	29,345,000	26,597,766	25,176,057
New Democrat Opposition services	650,000	663,399	483,512
Office of the Speaker	483,000	457,475	461,588
Official Opposition services	1,810,000	1,894,475	1,459,286
Vacant electoral division	126,000	-	-
	52,086,000	**45,417,921**	**41,941,865**
Valuation Adjustments:			
Accommodation costs (Note 5)		624,687	748,593
Capitalization of assets expensed as supplies (Note 3b)		(752,880)	(1,225,050)
Amortization of capital assets (Note 3b)		969,834	1,118,003
Provision for (reduction in) Member's transition allowance liability (Note 6)		(946,186)	(1,018,657)
Provision for vacation pay liability		55,124	55,288
Net purchase of inventory		(7,358)	(14,835)
		(56,779)	**(336,658)**
		45,361,142	**41,605,207**
NET OPERATING RESULTS		**(43,979,415)**	**(40,190,885)**

The accompanying notes and schedules are part of these financial statements.

	2008	2007
OPERATING TRANSACTIONS:		
Net operating results	($43,979,415)	($40,190,885)
Add non-cash charges:		
Amortization of capital assets	969,834	1,118,003
Increase in vacation pay liability	55,124	55,288
(Increase) decrease in accounts receivable and advances	150,773	(43,244)
(Increase) in inventory	(7,358)	(14,835)
Increase in accounts payable and accrued liabilities	292,549	408,836
Increase in transition allowance liability	710,526	1,718,819
CASH USED BY OPERATING TRANSACTIONS	**(41,807,967)**	**(36,948,018)**
INVESTING TRANSACTIONS:		
Acquisition of capital assets	(752,880)	(1,225,050)
FINANCING TRANSACTIONS:		
Net transfer from general revenues	47,426,136	38,913,565
Net cash provided	4,865,289	740,497
Cash, beginning of year	24,423,218	23,682,721
Cash, end of year	29,288,507	24,423,218

The accompanying notes and schedules are part of these financial statements.

Legislative Assembly Office
Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended March 31, 2008

NOTE 1
Authority

The Legislative Assembly Office (the "Office") is operated under the authority of the *Legislative Assembly Act.* Annual operating budgets are approved by the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services.

NOTE 2
Purpose

Within the traditions of parliamentary democracy as constitutionally established in Alberta, the Legislative Assembly Office will:

1. Support the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in carrying out the duties of office.
2. Support Members by providing services, advice, information and infrastructure required to carry out their roles as elected representatives.
3. Record the proceedings and maintain and preserve the records of the Legislative Assembly.
4. Inform and educate the public on behalf of Members and the institution of Parliament.
5. Provide a positive, productive, healthy and secure environment for Members and staff of the Assembly.
6. Support the Assembly in protecting its institutions and privileges.
7. Support the exchange of ideas/information among Parliaments.
8. Build partnerships with external clients in support of the institution of Parliament.

NOTE 3
Summary of Significant Accounting Policies and Reporting Practices

These financial statements are prepared in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles for the public sector as recommended by the Public Sector Accounting Board of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants:

a) Reporting Entity

The reporting entity is the Legislative Assembly Office, for which the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly is responsible.

The Office operates within the General Revenue Fund (the "Fund"). The Fund is administrated by the Minister of Finance. All receipts of the Office are deposited into the Fund and all disbursements made by the Office are paid from the Fund. The net transfer from the Fund is the difference between all cash receipts and all cash disbursements made.

b) Basis of Financial Reporting

Revenues
All revenues are reported on the accrual basis of accounting.

Expenses
Expenses represent the costs of resources consumed during the year on the Office's operations.

Valuation Adjustments
Valuation adjustments include changes in the valuation allowances used to reflect assets at their net recoverable or other appropriate value. Valuation adjustments also represent the change in management's estimate of future payments arising from obligations relating to vacation pay and transition allowance. Furthermore, accommodation costs, provided by Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation at no cost, are included in valuation adjustments so as to show the entire cost of the operation of the Office.

Assets

Financial assets of the Office are limited to financial claims such as cash, advances to and accounts receivable from other organizations, employers and other individuals.

Inventory held for resale is reported at the lower of cost and net realizable value.

Capital assets of the Office are recorded at cost and amortized on a straight-line basis, over the estimated useful lives of the assets, invoiced at $2,500 or greater, as follows:

Computer hardware and software	2 years
Office equipment	5 years
Furniture	10 years

The Office follows government budgetary practices that allow funds from an operating budget to be used to purchase capital assets. These purchases are included in expenses on the statement of operations, but are then removed from expenses through a valuation adjustment and are capitalized and amortized over their useful lives.

The fair value of cash and accounts receivable and advances are estimated to approximate their book values.

Liabilities

Liabilities include all financial claims payable by the Office at fiscal year end.

The Members' transition allowance is estimated based on Members' years of service and their most recent remuneration amounts. The annual charge is the amount that is estimated to have been earned by Members during the year.

The fair values of accounts payable and accrued liabilities, and Members' transition allowance are estimated to approximate their book values.

Net Assets

Net assets represent the difference between the value of assets held by the Office and its liabilities.

NOTE 4

Capital Assets

	2008			2007
	COST	ACCUMULATED AMORTIZATION	NET BOOK VALUE	NET BOOK VALUE
Office equipment	$348,343	$243,042	$105,301	$140,847
Furniture	2,682,809	1,302,144	1,380,665	1,433,724
Computer hardware and software	2,893,500	2,628,112	265,388	393,737
TOTAL CAPITAL ASSETS	**$5,924,653**	**$4,173,299**	**$1,751,354**	**$1,968,308**

NOTE 5

Contribution from Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation

Included in the $624,687 (2007 - $748,593) contribution from Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation is: $45,000 for renovations to the 5th floor of the Legislature Annex; and $10,000 to fund a costing/functional study for the north-south pedway for potential redevelopment.

NOTE 6

Members' Transition Allowance

The Office implemented a Members' transition allowance on October 1, 1998. The provisions of the allowance were established in accordance with the Members' Allowances Order (RMSC 1992, c. M-1, as amended, Section 9.)

A transition allowance is paid to every Member at the time of dissolution of the Legislature unless they are re-elected in the next election. Members who resign their seats are also eligible for the allowance.

Under section 9, the amount paid for service commencing on or after March 20, 1989, is determined by multiplying three months' salary, based on the average monthly salary for the three calendar years in which the person received their highest salary, by the number of years the person served as a Member on or after March 20, 1989. "Salary" is defined in section 9(1). For service periods prior to March 20, 1989, the allowance is calculated by multiplying the highest rate of a Member's monthly indemnity and expense allowances for one month for every year of service prior to March 20, 1989 with no restrictions. There is no credit for years of service for which the Member has previously received a payment under Section 9 or the predecessor section. Eligible recipients may elect to be paid the allowance over a period of up to four years.

In the event of death of an active Member, a transition allowance equivalent to the amount owed at passing is paid to the Member's estate.

	2007-2008	2006-2007
Liability at beginning of year	$18,568,977	$16,850,158
Total transition allowance payments	(2,618,289)	(1,462,523)
Total transition allowance expense	3,328,814	3,181,342
LIABILITY AT END OF YEAR	**$19,279,503**	**$18,568,977**
Voted expense	$4,275,000	$4,200,000
Valuation adjustment	(946,186)	(1,018,658)
TOTAL TRANSITION ALLOWANCE EXPENSE	**$3,328,814**	**$3,181,342**

NOTE 7

Defined Benefit Plans

The Office participates in the following multi-employer pension plans: Management Employees Pension Plan and Public Service Pension Plan. The Office also participates in the multi-employer Supplementary Retirement Plan for Public Service Managers. The expense for these pension plans is equivalent to the annual contributions of $1,079,512 for the year ending March 31, 2008 (2007 - $910,620).

At December 31, 2007, the Management Employees Pension Plan reported a deficiency of $84,341,000 (2006 - $6,765,000) and the Public Service Pension Plan reported a deficiency of $92,070,000 (2006 - surplus of $153,024,000). At December 31, 2007, the Supplementary Retirement Plan for Public Service Managers had a surplus of $1,510,000 (2006- $3,698,000).

The Office also participates in a multi-employer Long Term Disability Income Continuance Plan. At March 31, 2008, the Management, Opted Out and Excluded Plan reported an actuarial surplus of $7,874,000 (2007- $10,148,000). The expense for this plan is limited to employer's annual contributions for the year.

NOTE 8

Budget	
EXPENSES:	
2007-2008 budget[a]	$52,086,000
2007-2008 actual expenses (excluding valuation adjustments)	45,417,921
2007-2008 unexpended (excluding valuation adjustments)	$6,668,079

[a] 2007-08 Offices of the Legislative Assembly Estimates presented April 19, 2007.

NOTE 9

Approval of Financial Statements

These financial statements were approved by the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

SCHEDULE 1

Expenses Detailed by Object

	2008		2007
	BUDGET	ACTUAL	ACTUAL
EXPENSES:			
Salaries, wages and employer contributions	$22,482,710	$18,727,267	$16,271,284
Supplies and services	14,267,990	12,170,394	12,061,096
Grants	7,000	200	5,450
Payments to MLAs and Executive Council	15,328,300	14,520,060	13,604,035
TOTAL EXPENSES	**$52,086,000**	**$45,417,921**	**$41,941,865**

SCHEDULE 2

Salary and Benefits Disclosure

	2008				2007
	Base Salary[1]	Other Cash Benefits[2]	Other Non-cash Benefits[3]	Total	Total
SENIOR OFFICIAL					
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly[4]	$230,520	$20,738	$54,639	$305,897	$242,340
SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM					
Senior Parliamentary Counsel	142,116	11,835	37,393	191,344	175,261
Director, Information Technology and Human Resource Services	134,868	19,860	33,532	188,260	174,404
Senior Parliamentary Counsel	142,116	11,754	38,031	191,901	165,636
Clerk Assistant and Director of House Services	110,664	8,857	27,231	146,752	140,010
Legislature Librarian	105,792	13,749	26,272	145,813	137,692
Director of Visitor, Ceremonial & Security Services and Sergeant-at-Arms	105,648	9,834	26,822	142,304	133,848
Director of Financial Management and Administrative Services and Senior Financial Officer	107,412	8,623	27,154	143,189	132,231
MANAGER SUB-TOTAL	**$848,616**	**$84,512**	**$216,435**	**$1,149,563**	**$1,059,082**

[1] Base salary includes regular base pay.
[2] Other cash benefits include bonuses, vacation payouts and reimbursement for Learning and Wellness Accounts.
[3] Other non-cash benefits include the Legislative Assembly Office's share of all employee benefits and contributions or payments made on behalf of employees including pension, health care, dental coverage, group life insurance, short- and long-term disability plans, WCB premiums, professional memberships and tuition fees.
[4] Automobile is provided; no dollar amount included in benefits and allowances figures.



COMMONWEALTH
PARLIAMENTARY
ASSOCIATION (CPA)

ALBERTA BRANCH

President's Report

"We watch, we listen and we learn from what has worked for other Legislatures and in other jurisdictions."

Hon. Ken Kowalski, President of the Alberta Branch of the CPA and Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

PRESENTATION ON PARLIAMENTARY REFORM IN ALBERTA

A teacher by trade, I have always put a lot of stock in lifelong learning, but there really is no guide on how to be an effective Member or good legislator. That is where interparliamentary relations come in. Having the opportunity to learn from our peers is very important to legislators. We watch, we listen and we learn from what has worked for other Legislatures and in other jurisdictions. This is our classroom. The great part is that we all take turns playing the part of student and teacher. At the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's Canadian Regional Conference held in Halifax from July 23 to 27, I was happy to share Alberta's success with other Canadian legislators during my presentation on democratic reforms at the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. Over the past couple of years a lot of reforms have been instituted, but my discussion focused on the growing power of the private Member. As Speaker I have always advocated that all Members, regardless of party affiliation, should be involved in the development of policy. Whether a minister or a private Member, every Member needs to have a voice in order to represent. I am proud to say that to date our Legislature has voted on and passed more private Members' bills and motions than any other Legislature in Canada. This is in part due to policy like our bill draw. In Alberta the order of consideration of private Members' bills is determined by a random draw. This allows all Members the same opportunity to contribute meaningful legislation.

As well, recent changes to the Standing Orders have focused on increasing the profile of private Members. The introduction of Policy Field Committees (PFCs) in 2007 has made huge strides in bringing the issues to Albertans and allowing private Members to be more active in policy debates. The PFCs are comprised of private Members from all parties. The Committee of Supply was also restructured to allow for more time for private Members to debate main estimates, and every week up to four hours are dedicated to private Members' business. In Alberta we are committed to every Member having a voice and every Member having the opportunity to learn and share their knowledge.

CELEBRATING 400 YEARS IN QUEBEC CITY

Another highlight for me in 2008 was attending the Conference of Speakers of Francophone Parliamentary Assemblies and the 400th anniversary of Quebec City. Not only were there very informative business sessions, but the conference allowed legislators to participate in the massive celebrations. I presented President Michel Bissonnet with a bronze statue commemorating the ever-growing friendship between our provinces on behalf of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta on the occasion of Quebec City's 400th anniversary.

Secretary's Report

"Keeping ahead of the issues requires that Members and their staff keep current. One way to do this is through interparliamentary relations."

W.J. David McNeil, Secretary of the Alberta Branch of the CPA and Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Few people truly understand the intricacies of the legislative landscape. The issues legislators are required to deal with are vast and always evolving. Keeping ahead of the issues requires that Members and their staff keep current. One way to do this is through interparliamentary relations.

I was happy to attend the 25th Canadian Presiding Officers' Conference held in Quebec City from January 24 to 27. I attended many relevant information sessions, including Parliamentary Management Boards and the Role of the Speaker in Effective Decision-Making, The Secrets of an Effective Speakership, Order and Decorum and many more.

As well, many of our Members were able to attend conferences throughout the year. Although there was an election in early 2008 and our Legislature welcomed 33 new Members, a membership change of over 30 per cent, the new Members hit the ground running, and many were very keen to learn and experience as much as possible, including from conference attendance and interparliamentary relations. In 2008 33 Members attended 12 conferences, the topics of which covered everything from the disconnect between urban and rural communities to the protection of the digital records of a Legislative Assembly to exploring new ways to communicate with constituents.

These three topics hold specific interest for our province as our Legislative Assembly serves over 3 million residents, close to 588,000 of whom live in rural communities. Rural communities face different challenges than their urban counterparts, and what is considered a priority for a rural community isn't necessarily the same as that for an urban population. Between 2001 and 2006 our province's population grew 10.6 per cent. While both urban and rural populations experienced increases, urban areas saw an increase of 12.3 per cent while rural areas saw an increase of only 3.7 per cent. Alberta has long been considered quite rural in its values, but as the numbers indicate, we are seeing a huge shift. This shift in balance will undoubtedly mark a change in the priorities and issues the Members of the Legislative Assembly face.

Currently our Legislative Assembly is rolling out a new information records management program. Working in an organization that handles not only sensitive materials but also in many cases historically relevant materials, the digital age brings many challenges and opportunities to our operations. For example, digitizing the *Journals* and making them available online serves to better preserve the hard-copy versions while at the same time increases access to these important documents.

Of course, our Legislative Assembly is always looking for new and more effective ways to communicate with the public. As preferred communication methods continue to shift towards the online medium, we are forced to review our strategies and embrace new ways of thinking.

Looking towards our future, it is clear that the sky is the limit and that learning from other jurisdictions will become more and more valuable.

Bursaries

Bursaries are presented annually to nominees from TUXIS Parliament of Alberta and the Alberta Girls' Parliament to increase interest in the parliamentary process among young Albertans.

TUXIS Parliament of Alberta - Kathleen Kelly, Edmonton-Manning

Alberta Girls' Parliament - Kimberly Reichle, St. Albert and Shannon Robertson, Edmonton-Meadowlark

Grade 6 Essay

A province-wide essay contest is held annually for Grade 6 students to encourage greater awareness of the Commonwealth and the parliamentary system. This year Allyson Kupchenko of Strathcona won first place, with Megan Connors of Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview and Emma Maria Van Loon of Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock finishing second and third respectively.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

ALBERTA BRANCH

Members of the Legislative Assembly



Hon. Cindy Ady
Calgary-Shaw
Minister of Tourism, Parks and Recreation
(PC)



Len Mitred
St. Albert
(PC)



Moe Amery
Calgary-East
(PC)



Rob Anderson
Airdrie-Chestermere
Parliamentary Assistant, Solicitor General and Public Security
(PC)



Earl Benito
Edmonton-Mill Woods
(PC)



Evan Berger
Livingstone-Macleod
Parliamentary Assistant, Sustainable Resource Development
(PC)



Naresh Bhardwaj
Edmonton-Ellerslie
(PC)



Manmeet Bhullar
Calgary-Montrose
Parliamentary Assistant, Advanced Education and Technology
(PC)



Hon. Lindsay Blackett
Calgary-North West
Minister of Culture and Community Spirit
(PC)



Laurie Blakeman
Edmonton-Centre
Official Opposition House Leader
(AL)



Guy Boutilier
Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo
(PC)



Dr. Neil Brown, QC
Calgary-Nose Hill
(PC)



Pearl Calahasen
Lesser Slave Lake
(PC)



Robin Campbell
West Yellowhead
(PC)



Wayne Cao
Calgary-Fort
Deputy Speaker
(PC)



Harry B. Chase
Calgary-Varsity
Official Opposition Whip
(AL)



Cal Dallas
Red Deer-South
(PC)



Hon. Ray Danyluk
Lac La Biche-St. Paul
Minister of Municipal Affairs
(PC)



Alana DeLong
Calgary-Bow
(PC)



Jonathan Denis
Calgary-Egmont
(PC)



Arno Doerksen
Strathmore-Brooks
(PC)



Wayne Drysdale
Grande Prairie-Wapiti
(PC)



Doug Elniski
Edmonton-Calder
(PC)



Hon. Iris Evans
Sherwood Park
Minister of Finance and Enterprise
(PC)



Kyle Fawcett
Calgary-North Hill
(PC)



Heather Forsyth
Calgary-Fish Creek
(PC)



Hon. Yvonne Fritz
Calgary-Cross
Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs
(PC)



Hon. Hector G. Goudreau
Dunvegan-Central Peace
Minister of Employment and Immigration
(PC)



Doug Griffiths
Battle River-Wainwright
Parliamentary Assistant, Agriculture and Rural Development
(PC)



Hon. George Groeneveld
Highwood
Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development
(PC)



Hon. Dave Hancock, QC
Edmonton-Whitemud
Minister of Education
Government House Leader
(PC)



Hon. Jack Hayden
Drumheller-Stettler
Minister of Infrastructure
(PC)



Kent Hehr
Calgary-Buffalo
(LIB)



Fred Horne
Edmonton-Rutherford
(PC)



Hon. Doug Horner
Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert
Minister of Advanced Education and Technology
(PC)



Hon. Mary Anne Jablonski
Red Deer-North
Minuster of Seniors and Community Supports
(PC)



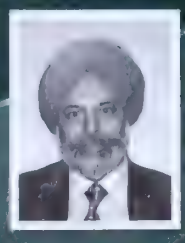
Broyce Jacobs
Cardston-Taber-Warner
(PC)



Jeff Johnson
Athabasca-Redwater
(PC)



Art Johnston
Calgary-Hays
(PC)



Darshan S. Kang
Calgary-McCall
(LIB)



Hon. Heather Klimchuk
Edmonton-Glenora
Minister of Service Alberta
(PC)



Hon. Mel Knight
Grande Prairie-Smoky
Minister of Energy
(PC)

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

ALBERTA BRANCH

Members of the Legislative Assembly



Hon. Kenneth R. Kowalski

Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock

Speaker

(PC)



Genia Leskiw

Bonnyville-Cold Lake

(PC)



Hon. Ron Liepert

Calgary-West

Minister of Health and Wellness

(PC)



Hon. Fred Lindsay

Stony Plain

Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security

(PC)



Thomas A. Lukaszuk

Edmonton-Castle Downs

Parliamentary Assistant, Municipal Affairs

(PC)



Ty Lund

Rocky Mountain House

(PC)



Hugh MacDonald

Edmonton-Gold Bar

(LIB)



Richard Marz

Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills

(PC)



Brian Mason

Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood

Leader of the ND Opposition

(ND)



Barry McFarland

Little Bow

(PC)



Diana McQueen

Drayton Valley-Calmar

Parliamentary Assistant, Environment

(PC)



Len Mitzel

Cypress-Medicine Hat

(PC)



Hon. Ted Morton

Foothills-Rocky View

Minister of Sustainable Resource Development

(PC)



Rachel Notley

Edmonton-Strathcona

ND Opposition House Leader

(ND)



Frank Oberle

Peace River

Government Whip

(PC)



Verlyn Olson, QC

Wetaskiwin-Camrose

(PC)

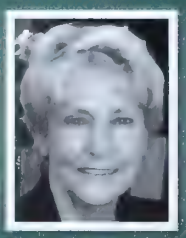


Hon. Luke Ouellette

Innisfail-Sylvan Lake

Minister of Transportation

(PC)



Bridget A. Pastoor

Lethbridge-East

Official Opposition Duputy Whip

(LIB)



Ray Prins

Lacombe-Ponoka

(PC)



Dave Quest

Strathcona

(PC)



Hon. Alison Redford, QC

Calgary-Elbow

Minister of Justice and Attorney General

(PC)



Hon. Rob Renner
Medicine Hat
Minister of Environment
Deputy Government House Leader
(PC)



Dave Rodney
Calgary-Lougheed
(PC)



George Rogers
Leduc-Beaumont-Devon
(PC)



Peter Sandhu
Edmonton-Manning
(PC)



Janice Sarich
Edmonton-Decore
Parliamentary Assistant, Education
(PC)



Dr. Raj Sherman
Edmonton-Meadowlark
Parliamentary Assistant, Health and Wellness
(PC)



Hon. Lloyd Snelgrove
Vermilion-Lloydminster
President of the Treasury Board
(PC)



Hon. Ed Stelmach
Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville
Premier
President of Executive Council
(PC)



Hon. Ron Stevens, QC
Calgary-Glenmore
Deputy Premier
Minister of International and International Relations
(PC)



Dr. David Swann
Calgary-Mountain View
Leader of the Official Opposition (from December 15, 2008)
(LIB)



Dr. Kevin Taft
Edmonton-Riverview
Leader of the Official Opposition (to December 14, 2008)
(LIB)



Hon. Janis Tarchuk
Banff-Cochrane
Minister of Children and Youth Services
(PC)



Dave Taylor
Calgary-Currie
(LIB)



George VanderBurg
Whitecourt-Ste. Anne
(PC)



Tony Vandermeer
Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview
(PC)



Greg Weadick
Lethbridge-West
(PC)



Len Webber
Calgary-Foothills
Parliamentary Assistant, Energy
(PC)



Teresa Woo-Paw
Calgary-Mackay
(PC)



David Xiao
Edmonton-McClung
Parliamentary Assistant, Employment and Immigration
(PC)



Hon. Gene Zwozdesky
Edmonton-Mill Creek
Minister of Aboriginal Relations
Deputy Government House Leader
(PC)

Conferences

CANADIAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Halifax, Nova Scotia
July 23-27, 2008

DELEGATES

Hon. Ken Kowalski, Speaker

David Xiao, MLA
Edmonton-McClung

Ty Lund, MLA
Rocky Mountain House

Raj Sherman, MLA
Edmonton-Meadowlark

Heather Forsyth, MLA
Calgary-Fish Creek

Guy Boutilier, MLA
Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo

Rob Anderson, MLA
Airdrie-Chestermere

Susan Purdie
Special Assistant to the Speaker

AGENDA

- Opening ceremony
- From Billion Dollar Deficits to Billion Dollar Surpluses in Four Short Years
 Presented by Steve Kent, MHA, Newfoundland and Labrador
- Manitoba's Special Envoy for Military Affairs: The Journey
 Presented by Bonnie Korzeniowski, MLA, Manitoba
- The Estimates Process: Issues and Reform
 Presented by Harry Bloy, MLA, British Columbia
- Parliaments and Sustainable Development
 Presented by Geoffrey Kelley, MNA, Quebec
- Democracy 250: Commemorating 250 Years of Representative Government in Canada.
- Regional Council Meeting (Canadian CPA Regional Council)
- The Nova Scotia House of Assembly: On the Cusp of Change?
- Democratic Reforms at the Legislative Assembly of Alberta
 Presented by Hon. Ken Kowalski, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta
- Supply Management: Benefits to Producers and Consumers
 Presented by Alan McIsaac, MLA, Prince Edward Island

REPORTS

By Ty Lund

Attending the CPA regional conference was very interesting. It is always great to meet other parliamentarians from across Canada. Of the eight sessions held during the conference, there are several that stood out to me.

The session entitled "From Billion Dollar Deficits to Billion Dollar Surpluses in Four Short Years: Newfoundland highlighted how they went from a "have-not province" to a "have province" in four years. This was a result of oil revenues and management of government spending. It is interesting to note that Newfoundland does not have a heritage savings plan, like Alberta, for their surpluses. With their increased provincial revenues, they will begin increasing their capital spending.

Bonnie Korzeniowski, MLA, Manitoba, made a presentation on Manitoba's inclusion of military personnel.

By David Xiao

I was honoured to attend the CPA conference. The theme of the conference was to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Canadian parliamentary democracy. As a newly elected Member this trip was a very valuable and educational experience. I was inspired and enlightened by the speeches, especially by our own Speaker, Hon. Ken Kowalski, who made a very impressive presentation about our achievements on respecting the role of private Members in Alberta's parliamentary system. I had the opportunity to discuss many issues of regional and national perspective. I was amazed by learning the different set-ups of political systems in other jurisdictions in Canada.

This conference not only gave me a chance to visit the Maritimes, but it also gave my family the opportunity to appreciate the history of Canada. We are proud of being Canadians.

By Raj Sherman

I had the honour of attending the CPA conference held in Halifax.

Personally, the highlight of the conference was the opportunity to visit the birthplace of Canadian democracy, the Nova Scotia Legislature, and view a presentation entitled "Democracy 250: Commemorating 250 Years of Representative Government in Canada" by past Premiers of Nova Scotia Russell MacLellan and John F. Hamm.. Steve Kent, MHA, Newfoundland and Labrador, hosted the informative session regarding business cycle changes.

A special mention goes to Hon. Ken Kowalski, who enthusiastically presented "Democratic Reforms at the Legislative Assembly of Alberta." He highlighted the fact that the Alberta Legislature has voted on and passed more private Members' bills and motions than any other legislature in Canada.

Finally, the conference provided a chance to share, in a nonpartisan atmosphere, solutions to areas of opportunity all Canadians face.

In sum, it is my belief that through non-partisan dialogue and co-operation we can advance democracy and efficiency throughout all Canadian provinces and territories.

CANADIAN REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

Halifax, Nova Scotia
July 25, 2008

DELEGATE

Hon. Ken Kowalski, Speaker

AGENDA

- CWP Canadian Region Steering Committee Report
- Financial Matters
- Regional Executive Committee 2008-09
- Canadian Parliamentary Review
- Delegation Secretaries – 54th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference
- Regional Council Website
- Regional Conference Sites
- Parliamentary Seminar Sites

- Conference of Presiding Officer Sites
- Verbal Report on the Executive Committee

25TH CANADIAN PRESIDING OFFICERS' CONFERENCE

Quebec City, Quebec
January 24-27, 2008

DELEGATES

Richard Marz, MLA
Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills

Shiraz Shariff, MLA
Calgary-McCall

Dr. David McNeil, Clerk

AGENDA

- Opening address of the 25th Canadian Presiding Officers' Conference
- Parliamentary Management Boards and the Role of the Speaker in Effective Decision Making
- The Secrets of an Effective Speakership
- Maintaining Order and Decorum
- The Green Report
- The Canadian Parliamentary System: Pragmatic Adaptations
- The Research Chair of Democracy and Parliamentary Institutions

CANADIAN REGIONAL SEMINAR

Winnipeg, Manitoba
October 16-19, 2008

DELEGATES

Carl Benito, MLA
Edmonton-Mill Woods

Teresa Woo-Paw, MLA
Calgary-Mackay

AGENDA

- Business Session 1 – Urban-Rural Disconnect
 Presented by Ralph Eichler, MLA, Manitoba
- Business Session 2 – Newfoundland and Labrador Audit Committee
 Presented by Elizabeth Marshall, MHA, Newfoundland and Labrador
- Business Session 3 – Rural Development Initiatives in Prince Edward Island
 Presented by Robert Henderson, MLA, Prince Edward Island
- Business Session 4 – Nurse Recruitment and Retention
 Presented by Laura Ross, MLA, Saskatchewan
- Business Session 5 – The Role of Private Members' Legislation and Public Policy
 Presented by Linda Jeffrey, MPP, Ontario

REPORT

By Carl Benito

The conference is a fantastic opportunity for networking with other legislators. The regional convention gave me an idea how Members of the Assembly from other jurisdictions lend themselves to a discussion and debate on the merits of issues rather than partisan discourses. Further, it shows the human behaviour during and after presentations and to see first-hand the difference of knowledge by the delegates on parliamentary procedures in a free society like Canada.

In summary, the conference gave me a better appreciation of everything about us in Alberta, our legislative system and our election system since its inception in 1905. As a result of my attendance in the conference, in my stream of consciousness, I came back refreshed and loving more the Alberta Legislative Assembly.

COMMONWEALTH WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS - CANADIAN REGION

Halifax, Nova Scotia
July 21, 2008

DELEGATES

Heather Forsyth, MLA
Calgary-Fish Creek

Susan Purdie, Special Assistant to the Speaker

AGENDA AND REPORT

The CWP is a network that provides the opportunity for its members to share experiences, discuss topics of interest and seek solutions to the special problems faced by the female minority in parliaments.

- Opening remarks – Charlotte L'Ecuyer, Chairperson from Quebec.
- Campaign School – Hon. Carolyn Bolivar-Getson, MLA from Nova Scotia – talk about the road to representation and getting more women involved in politics.
- Women in Leadership – Alexa McDonough, MP, House of Commons, spoke on her experience as a woman in politics and discussed the issue of proportional representation and how its definition varies in different jurisdictions.
- Hon. Kathleen Casey, Speaker of the Prince Edward Island Assembly, shared her thoughts about getting more women and young people involved in politics and keeping them interested.
- Turning up the Volume – Fran Gagnon, Executive Director of Equal Voice, which is an organization that works on getting more women elected in Canada. Equal Voice is currently working on several projects such as creating an online campaign school, establishing awards to individuals for achievements in their political career, a national awareness campaign and a mentorship program.

An open discussion followed with topics including potential next steps and ways to attract women to politics. The Chair encouraged representatives to CWP to hold a two-year appointment and urged the women attending to talk to their Speakers.

XXIV SESSION OF THE AMERICA REGION OF THE ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE (APF)

Quebec City, Quebec
June 30 - July 3

DELEGATES

Hon. Ken Kowalski, Speaker
Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock

Wayne Cao, MLA
Calgary-Fort

Harry Chase, MLA
Calgary-Varsity

George Rogers, MLA
Leduc-Beaumont-Devon

Louise Kamuchik, Section Administrative Secretary
Clerk Assistant/Director of House Services
Legislative Assembly Office

REPORT

Three themes were discussed at the regional meeting. The first of these, entitled "Reflection on the Linguistic Duality of the 2010 Vancouver Winter and Olympics and Paralympics," was debated at length with parliamentarians adopting a resolution expressing the America Region's deep concerns over French television coverage of the games in an accessible and thorough manner. A resolution asking the Canada Section of the APF to prepare a new report on this issue for the 25th regional meeting was agreed to. The resolution also recommended to the Organisation international de la francophonie (OIF) that a position of Grand Witness of America Francophonie (Grand Témoin de la Francophonie d'Amérique) be created to monitor the use of the French language during the Olympic and Paralympic games. The resolution was subsequently sent to the organizing committee for the games as well as to a group of public authorities associated with the organization and financing of these games.

The second theme, "The Preservation of Cultural Heritage," was presented by the Quebec Section. Agreement was reached to expand on this theme for the 25th regional meeting.

The third theme dealt with the Ontario Youth Parliament and was presented by the Ontario Section.

SPEAKERS OF FRANCOPHONE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLIES CONFERENCE

Quebec City, Quebec
July 2 to 5, 2008

DELEGATES

Hon. Ken Kowalski, Speaker,
Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock

Harry Chase, MLA,
Calgary-Varsity

George Rogers, MLA,
Leduc-Beaumont-Devon

Louise Kamuchik, Section Administrative Secretary
Clerk Assistant/Director of House Services
Legislative Assembly Office

AGENDA

- Meeting of the Speakers of Francophone Parliamentary Assemblies

CONFERENCE OF PARLIAMENTARY PRESIDING OFFICERS OF THE FRANCOPHONIE

Quebec City, Quebec
July 2 to 5, 2008

REPORT

The presiding officers of some 45 parliaments of the French community met on July 4, 2008, in the National Assembly Chamber to discuss their role and means at their disposal to strengthen parliamentary democracy within their respective assemblies. Several presiding officers spoke on their perspectives regarding the measures required to reinforce the impact of democratic institutions. The importance of public participation in political life was also discussed.

A final declaration containing 21 points addressing the strengthening of democratic practices and enhancing the role of parliamentarians was adopted unanimously. Delegates also agreed to strengthen the capacity of assemblies to adopt legislation and oversee government budgets and government activity in the public interest. The importance of further developing the knowledge and skills required to better perform their duties as presiding officers was emphasized and agreement reached to commit to fostering an ongoing dialogue among APF members in order to consolidate democracy in the global Francophone community.

XXXIV PLENARY SESSION OF THE APF

Quebec City, Quebec
July 2 to 5, 2008

DELEGATES

Harry Chase, MLA
Calgary-Varsity

George Rogers, MLA
Leduc-Beaumont-Devon

Louise Kamuchik, Section Administrative Secretary
Clerk Assistant/Director of House Services
Legislative Assembly Office

AGENDA

Assembly of Quebec and Executive Vice President of the APF

- Meeting of the APF Bureau
- Meeting of committee directors
- Opening session of Women Parliamentarians Network
- Opening day of the 34th Working Session of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie with speeches by various officials
- Designation of permanent observer status to Serbia, Catalonia and Croatia and of associate member status to Lithuania
- Presentation by Mr. Abdou Diouf, General Secretary of the Francophonie
- General debate on the subject The Environment and the Development of Societies
- Order of the Pléiade ceremony
- Start of the working sessions of the commissions (Political Commission, Commission on Education, Communication and Cultural Affairs, Commission on Parliamentary Affairs, and Commission on Cooperation and Development)
- Presentation and discussion on: the future of TV5 World, the food crisis and the high cost of living
- Presentation of Commission Reports
- Discussion and vote on APF's advice for the next Chiefs of State Summit

- Ratification of a co-operative agreement between the APF and the United Nations Development Program

REPORT

The six-day meeting of the Session Ordinaire of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie resulted in the discussion and approval of 23 resolutions dealing with a variety of issues from the political situation in various countries such as Haiti, the food crisis, and the follow-up to the Bamako declaration.

COUNCIL ON GOVERNMENTAL ETHICS LAWS (COGEL)

Chicago, Illinois
December 7-10, 2008

DELEGATES

Len Mitzel, MLA
Cypress-Medicine Hat

Len Webber, MLA
Calgary-Foothills

Laurie Blakeman, MLA
Edmonton-Centre

Fred Horne, MLA
Edmonton-Rutherford

AGENDA

- Ethics Update
- Electronic Records, Access, Storage and Retention
- 2008 Election Outcome - Lessons Learned
- Public Finance Programs
- Just Who Is a Lobbyist and What Cost?
- Academia/Intellectual Property Session
- Freedom of Information: Enforcement and Penalties - What Are Our Remedies?
- Internet Campaigning and Fundraising
- Elections and Lawyers - It's Not Just About the Challenge
- Cascade Training: Train the Trainers to Train the Public
- Personal Financial Disclosure - How Much Is Too Much?
- Commissioners' Roundtable
- Electronic Filing Trends and Challenges
- Electronic Agency Management - Tracing and Monitoring
- International Roundtable - Global Perspectives
- Election Fiascos - An International Perspective
- Freedom of Information Update
- Campaign Finance Update Part 1 (Litigation)
- Professional Development-Employee Management
- Impact of Non - campaign Money on Public Officials
- Ethics Values vs. Rules
- Campaign Finance Update Part 2 (Legislation)
- Media Relations (Skills and Tools)
- "Big Dog, Little Puppies" Organizational Structure
- Revolving Door – Public Official to Lobbyist

REPORT

The conference program covered election issues, including Internet campaigning and financing, ethics and conflicts of interest, lobbying, information and protection of privacy, personal financial disclosure requirements in various jurisdictions, and other related matters of interest. Alberta was represented by delegates from the offices of the Officers of the Legislature, the city of Calgary, and the Legislative Offices Committee.

The keynote speakers for this conference included Professor Franzese, Seton Hall University School of Law; Thomas P. Sullivan, Partner, Jenner & Block, and former U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois; and Mr. Ronald Gould, CM, former Assistant Chief Electoral Officer of Canada.

COGEL is an international organization whose primary membership originates in the United States and Canada. Delegates and session participants at the 2008 conference were from the United States, Canada, Mexico, Britain and other jurisdictions. Canadian jurisdictions were well represented, and presenters, moderators and panelists included representatives from both federal and provincial level elections and ethics offices. The 2009 conference will be held in Scottsdale, Arizona, in December.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES

New Orleans, Louisiana
July 22-25, 2008

DELEGATES

Pearl Calahasen, MLA
Lesser Slave Lake

David Quest, MLA
Strathcona

Manmeet Bhullar, MLA
Calgary-Montrose

Tony Vandermeer, MLA
Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview

Bridget Pastoor, MLA
Lethbridge-East

Bev Alenius, Executive Assistant

AGENDA

- New Ways to Communicate with Constituents
- Civic Education: An International View
- Business Incentives: Attracting Arts and Entertainment Industries
- Teaching and Learning in the Internet Era
- Business Incentives: Courting Foreign Manufacturers
- Creating an Effective Statewide Information Technology Policy
- Networking Roundtables
- Orientation for Legislative Staff and Legislators New to the NCSL Legislative Summit
- Internet Archive and the Ontario Legislative Assembly Collaborative Project
- Best Common Practices to Make Committees Work Effectively
- Post-November Political Landscape
- Green Gadgets, Greener Factories and Greener Stores: The Business Case for Sustainability

- Opening Plenary: Energy, Economic and Environmental Sustainability
- Convening: The Legislator's Powerful Role
- Presidential Candidates' Views on Education
- Juggling Power, Principle and Professionalism: Ethics and Legislative Staff
- Overseeing Public-private Partnerships
- Women's Legislative Network Reception
- Higher Education's Role in Meeting Emerging Workforce Needs
- Becoming Resilient Change Masters: Staying Right Side Up in a World that Is Upside Down
- What Is the Financial Status of American Women?
- International Program at the Supreme Court
- Building a Workforce for the Future: The State Role
- Dealing with Drought: Opportunities for Innovation
- Immigrants and Economics: What's the Bottom Line?
- General Session: A Conversation about Solving America's Challenges
- Continuity of Government: Crisis Management Presentation
- What Reporters Want to Know
- New Leadership: Preparing the Women Leaders of Tomorrow
- America's Energy Coast: A New Sustainability Case Study
- Budgets on the Brink: Plotting a Course in Turbulent Times
- Lessons from the Trenches: Turning Around Poor Performing Schools
- General Session: The Changing Face of America
- Move Your Message with Technology
- Redesigning New Orleans: Lessons on Creating a Thriving Community
- Rising Food Prices: The End of Cheap Food?
- Louisiana Politics: Let the Good Times Roll
- Protecting Legislative Digital Records

REPORT

By all delegates:

Our delegation began the conference attending the welcome session led by former NCSL president Senator Steven Rauschenberger highlighting new ways to communicate with constituents, followed by an evening reception honouring the NCSL president-elect, Speaker Joe Hackney. Delegates had the opportunity to participate in more than 180 issue forums, which examined concerns facing legislators today. Some of our delegates attended other functions outside of the conference.

Manmeet Bhullar attended a session with Mayor Michael Bloomberg and subsequently had a conversation with him and other state representatives on Alberta's resources.

During discussions with our U.S. counterparts, much discussion surrounded the Alberta energy sector as well as Canada's universal health care system. In addition, the discussions with our U.S. colleagues focused on Alberta's economic position in Canada and throughout North America and were seen to be very positive.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST ECONOMIC REGION (PNWER)

Vancouver, B.C.
July 20-24, 2008

DELEGATES

Len Mitzel, MLA
Cypress-Medicine Hat

Alana DeLong, MLA
Calgary-Bow

Richard Marz, MLA
Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills

Kyle Fawcett, MLA
Calgary-North Hill

AGENDA

- PNWER Executive Committee Meeting and Luncheon
- Innovation Based Economic Development: National Trends and Implications
- Border Symposium I: Border Issues & Transportation challenges
- Telecom: Infrastructure Superhighway
- Energy: Analysis of the Future Demand in the Bi-national Region and the Inter-ties Needed to Support bringing Renewable Energy to Load Centers Throughout the Region.
- Agriculture: Cross-border Trade Issues
- Asia-Pacific Symposium: Impact of Greater Links Between North America and Asia Pacific on Global Competitiveness
- Environment: Marine Greenhouse Gas & Diesel Emission Reduction
- E3: Energy, Economy, Environment
- Workforce: Labour Mobility
- Healthcare: Innovations in Healthcare Delivery
- Private Sector Session
- Environment/Tourism: Managing Tourism's Environmental Footprint
- Transportation: Solutions for Anticipated Growth of Asia-Pacific Traffic and Trade
- Energy: Ocean and River Energy
- Water Issues
- Trade and Economic Development
- Tourism
- Homeland Security
- Charting PNWER's Direction for the Next Three Years: Perspectives from States and Provinces

PNWER ECONOMIC LEADERSHIP FORUM

Whistler, B.C.
November 20-21, 2008

DELEGATES

Len Mitzel, MLA
Cypress-Medicine Hat

Richard Marz, MLA
Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills

Alana DeLong, MLA
Calgary-Bow

Kyle Fawcett, MLA
Calgary-North Hill

Len Webber, MLA
Calgary-Foothills

AGENDA

- Border Issues
- Workforce Development
- Environment and Energy
- Ocean Energy
- Energy Horizons
- 2010 Olympics

REPORT

By Ron Stevens:

The meeting was well attended and allowed MLAs and government officials to network with legislators, institutions and companies from across the PNWER region. Over the two-day period delegates participated in eight sessions, with topics that included climate change adaptation, carbon capture and storage, border security, workforce mobility, energy requirements and the 2010 Olympics.

Northwest Territories Premier Floyd Roland hosted a reception that included a presentation on doing business in the NWT and closed with a proposal that the NWT join PNWER as the fifth Canadian jurisdiction in the organization, along with the five U.S. members. Following the conference, Executive Committee members met to discuss direction of the organization, the budget, the annual summit in Boise and program development.

JOINT CANADIAN COUNCIL OF LEGISLATIVE AUDITORS AND CANADIAN COUNCIL OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEES CONFERENCE

Whitehorse, Yukon
September 7-9, 2008

DELEGATES

Hugh MacDonald, Chair, MLA
Edmonton-Gold Bar

Doug Griffiths, Deputy Chair, MLA
Battle River-Wainwright

Len Mitzel, MLA
Cypress-Medicine Hat

Robin Campbell, MLA
West Yellowhead

Corinne Dacyshyn, Committee Clerk

Philip Massolin, Committee
Research Co-ordinator

AGENDA

- Overview of the Finds from CCAF-World Bank-KPMG PAC Survey
- Good Practices in Issuing Recommendations and Following Up
- Presentation on Report by Newfoundland Supreme Court Justice Derek Green
- Presentation on Performance Reporting, including Alberta Public Performance Reporting – Report on User Consultation Groups
- Trends and Opportunities in Performance Reporting

REPORT

The Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees conference was attended by parliamentarians, researchers, committee clerks and other professionals from across Canada and the Canadian House of Commons. This conference is held at the same time as the annual conference of the Canadian Council of Legislative Auditors (CCOLA), and the two groups shared a full-day business session.

Mr. Fred Dunn, FCA, Alberta Auditor General, and Mr. Doug Wylie, CMA, Assistant Auditor General from Alberta, attended as CCOLA delegates. Mrs. Lori Trudgeon, communications manager, attended as an observer.

By Hugh MacDonald:

It was a pleasure to represent the Legislative Assembly of Alberta at the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees (CCPAC) and the Canadian Council of Legislative Auditors (CCOLA) annual conference. The sessions were all very interesting. Two sessions, however, stand out: the presentation by Newfoundland Supreme Court Justice Derek Green stemming from the Auditor General of Newfoundland's report on legislative spending and the report by Mr. John Doyle, Auditor General of British Columbia, on trends and opportunities in performance reporting. The dialogue with legislators from across Canada was informative. The work carried out by the Alberta Public Accounts Committee is different than the work of other provincial committees.

As chair of the Alberta Standing Committee on Public Accounts, I look forward to hosting the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees (CCPAC) and Canadian Council of Legislative Auditors (CCOLA) annual conference along with Mr. Fred Dunn, FCA, Auditor General of Alberta, in Edmonton in 2009.

WESTERN CANADIAN SYMPOSIUM ON PUBLIC PERFORMANCE REPORTING

Vancouver, B.C.
September 10-11, 2008

DELEGATES

Hugh MacDonald, Chair, Public Accounts, MLA
Edmonton-Gold Bar

Doug Griffiths, Deputy Chair, MLA
Battle River-Wainwright

AGENDA

Session 1 – Showcasing Recent Western Canadian Initiatives in Performance Reporting

Session 2 – Case Studies: International Experiences in Citizen Engagement and Innovative E-performance Reporting

Session 3 – Towards the Principles for a Performance Report of the Future

Interparliamentary Relations 2008

The Speaker, Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees, Deputy Chair of Committees and staff of the Legislative Assembly Office are involved in ongoing liaison with Members and staff of other parliaments and with other representatives of foreign countries. In 2008 they met with the following visitors.

Mr. Gerardo Degollado Gonzalez
Presidente Municipal of Chapala, Mexico
January 28
Speaker Kowalski was presented with a key to the city
March 24

Mr. Moin-ul-Haque
Consul General of Pakistan in Vancouver
April 23

Mr. Bunyan Saptomo
Consul General of Indonesia in Vancouver
May 1

Mr. Walter Deplazes
Consul General of Switzerland in Vancouver
May 5

His Excellency Declan Kelly
Ambassador of Ireland
May 7

Mr. Yasuo Minemura
Consul General of Japan in Calgary
May 14

His Excellency Honoré Théodore Ahimakin
Ambassador of the Republic of Benin
May 21

Pacific Northwest Economic Region Meeting
George Eskridge, Idaho State Representative, PNWER President
Honourable Jim Kenyon, Minister of Economic Development, Yukon
Jeff Morris, Washington State Representative, PNWER Past President
Mike Chisholm, MLA & Ministerial Secretary to the Premier of Saskatchewan
Peter Lloyd, Consul General, Canadian Consulate-General, Seattle
Matt Morrison, Executive Director of PNWER
May 21

Mr. Bunyan Saptomo
Consul General of Indonesia
June 2

Mr. Klaus Achenbach
Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Vancouver
June 4

Admiral the Lord Boyce
Lord Warden and Admiral of the Cinque Ports
Constable of Dover Castle
June 9

Mr. Fernando Jacques de Magalhaes Pimenta
Consul General of the Federative Republic of Brazil in Vancouver
June 18

Partnership of Parliaments
Alberta hosts German Parliamentarians
June 24 - 29

His Excellency Eugenio Ortega Riquelme
Ambassador of the Republic of Chile
June 23

Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians
June 23

Ms Gay Thompson
Deputy Speaker & Chair of Committees South Australia
August 21

His Excellency Professor Iyorwuese Hagher
High Commissioner, Federal Republic of Nigeria
September 8

His Excellency Guillermo Rishchynski
Canada's Ambassador to Mexico
Mexico Embassy
September 9

Mr. Uberto Vanni d'Archirafi
Consul General of the Republic of Italy in Vancouver
September 15

Mr. Alexander Budden
Consul General of the United Kingdom in Vancouver
September 22

His Excellency A.M. Yakub Ali
High Commissioner, People's Republic of Bangladesh
October 6

Her Excellency Teresita Vicente
Ambassador, Republic of Cuba
October 29

Hon. Wael Abou Faour
Minister of State, Lebanon
November 3

His Excellency Tomaž Kunstelj
Ambassador, Republic of Slovenia
November 5

His Excellency Edward Evelyn Greaves
High Commissioner, Barbados
November 17

His Excellency Miguel Maria N'Zau Puna
Ambassador, Republic of Angola
November 19

National People's Congress of China delegation
November 20-21

His Excellency Wim Geerts
Ambassador, Kingdom of the Netherlands
November 24

His Excellency Massoud Maalouf
Ambassador, Lebanon
November 26

His Excellency David Wilkins
Ambassador, United States of America
December 1

Mr. Alexandre Garcia
Consul General of France in Vancouver
December 3

Mr. Francisco X. Lopez Mena
Consul of Mexico in Calgary
December 8

Former Members of the Legislative Assembly Obituaries

Flags on the Legislature Building were flown at half mast on the day of the funeral for each former Member.

Dr. Carl Paproski
January 25, 1945 - January 13, 2008

Dr. Paproski was first elected in the election held November 2, 1982, and served until March 8, 1986. During his years of service he represented the constituency of Edmonton-Kingsway for the Progressive Conservative Party.

During his term of office Dr. Paproski served on several committees: Public Accounts; Public Affairs; Private Bills; Select Special Committee on Senate Reform; Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing and the Alberta Health Facilities Review Committee.

Pam Barrett
November 26, 1953 - January 21, 2008

Ms Barrett was first elected in the election held May 8, 1986, and served until May 18, 1993. In September of 1996 she was elected leader of the Alberta New Democrats and re-elected to the Legislature in March 11, 1997, and served until February 2, 2000. During her years of service she represented the constituency of Edmonton-Highlands for the Alberta New Democrats.

During her terms of office Ms Barrett also served as Official Opposition House Leader and Deputy Leader. She served on the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services; Public Affairs; Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing; Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries; Law and Regulations; Select Special Committee on Constitutional Reform; Legislative Offices; Select Special Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act Review Committee; Select Special Chief Electoral Officer Search Committee.

Colonel Arthur Ryan Smith
May 16, 1919 - June 30, 2008

Colonel Smith was first elected in the election held on June 29, 1955, and served until April 11, 1957. During his years of service he represented the constituency of Calgary for the Progressive Conservative Party.

During his term of office Colonel Smith served on several committees: Agriculture, Colonization, Immigration and Education; Municipal Law; Private Bills; Standing Orders and Printing; Privileges and Elections and Railways, Telephones and Irrigation.

Dr. Lawrence (Larry) Ralph Shaben
April 24, 1935 - September 6, 2008

Dr. Shaben was first elected in the election held March 26, 1975, and three subsequent consecutive general elections. During his years of service he represented the constituency of Lesser Slave Lake for the Progressive Conservative Party. He was the first Muslim Member of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta and the first-ever Muslim cabinet minister in Canadian history.

During his term of office Dr. Larry Shaben served on several committees: Standing Committee on Public Accounts; Standing Committee on Private Bills; Standing Committee on Public Affairs; Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act and Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing.

Dr. Shaben also served on Executive Council as Minister of Utilities and Telephones (1979–1982), Minister of Housing (1982–1986) and Minister for Economic Development and Trade (1986 –1989).

Gordon Emil Stromberg
December 25, 1927 - September 7, 2008

Mr. Stromberg was first elected in the election held August 30, 1971, and served until April 10, 1986. During his years of service he represented the constituency of Camrose for the Progressive Conservative Party.

During his term of office Mr. Stromberg served on several committees: Standing Committees on Public Accounts; Private Bills; Privileges and Elections; Standing Orders and Printing; Law, Law Amendments and Regulations; Public Affairs; Agriculture and Education; and Law and Regulations. He also served as chair of the Crop Insurance and Weather Modification Committee.

Robert R. (Roy) Brassard
October 1, 1930 - October 17, 2008

Mr. Brassard was first elected to the Alberta Legislature in the general election of May 8, 1986, and served until February 11, 1997. During his years of service he represented the constituency of Olds-Didsbury for the Progressive Conservative Party.

During his years in the Legislature Mr. Brassard served as Associate Minister of Family and Social Services, Minister Responsible for Seniors, Minister Responsible for the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, Minister Responsible for Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission and Minister Responsible for the Family Life and Substance Abuse Foundation.

Mr. Brassard also served on several committees, including Private Bills, Public Accounts, Law and Regulations, Members' Services and Legislative Offices.

Paul Langevin
January 15, 1942 - November 11, 2008

Mr. Langevin was first elected to the Alberta Legislature in the election held June 15, 1993, as a Liberal Member; he resigned as a Liberal Member and sat as an Independent from April 5, 1994, until April 25, 1995, at which time he joined the Progressive Conservative Party. He was re-elected on March 11, 1997, as a Progressive Conservative and served until February 12, 2001. During his years of service he represented the constituency of Lac La Biche-St. Paul.

During his term of office Mr. Langevin served on several committees: Select Standing Committee on Law and Regulations; Legislative Offices; Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing; Public Affairs; Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act; and Private Bills.

He also served on the Select Special Ombudsman Search Committee and the Chief Electoral Officer Search Committee.

Paul Langevin was also the first President of the Alberta Section of the APF (Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie) from 1995 to 2001.

"I am proud of the teamwork, dedication and professionalism that the staff of the Legislative Assembly Office have demonstrated over the past 25 years in providing service to all Members of the Legislative Assembly. Our efforts not only benefit Albertans today, but lay the foundation for the future."

W.J. David McNeil, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta



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